



DUKE  
UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY

*Treasure Room*

U.



LIBRARY









THE

HISTORY OF VIRGINIA;

COMMENCED BY

JOHN BURK,

AND CONTINUED BY

SKELTON JONES

AND

LOUIS HUE GIRARDIN.

VOL. IV.

26938

26938

—PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA, PROPRIETORS.  
PRINTED BY M. W. DUNNAVANT, FOR THE

1816.

INSTITUTION OF AGRICULTURE

THE INSTITUTION OF AGRICULTURE

THE INSTITUTION OF AGRICULTURE

THE INSTITUTION OF AGRICULTURE

THE INSTITUTION OF AGRICULTURE

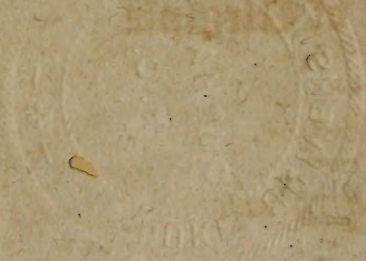
THE INSTITUTION OF AGRICULTURE

THE INSTITUTION OF AGRICULTURE

THE INSTITUTION OF AGRICULTURE

THE INSTITUTION OF AGRICULTURE

THE INSTITUTION OF AGRICULTURE



2290 S

2290 S  
2290 S  
2290 S  
2290 S  
2290 S

THE INSTITUTION OF AGRICULTURE

2290 S



TO

975,57

B95-9

P

Thomas Jefferson,

V. 4

THE OBLIGING NEIGHBOUR,

THE WARM, KIND, INDULGENT FRIEND,

AS WELL AS

THE ACTIVE PATRIOT,

THE ABLE STATESMAN,

AND

THE LIBERAL PHILOSOPHER,

THE FOLLOWING CONTINUATION OF

# The History of Virginia

ORIGINALLY AND JUSTLY

DEDICATED TO HIM,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

26938

L. H. GIRARDIN.

PHILADELPHIA REMARKS

5 6 3 3 8



## PREFATORY REMARKS.

---

IN accordance with the plan originally formed and announced to the public, by Mr. John Burk, I had, when I undertook to continue the History of Virginia, intended to bring my narrative down to the present day. My researches were accordingly made to embrace an extensive, diversified and laborious range; and, although my health was generally feeble, my mind most often depressed, and my time uniformly and unavoidably shattered by a multiplicity of clashing pursuits, yet my progress in a task with which I had so many reasons to be pleased, has been such as nearly to produce the completion of the whole. Unfortunately, typographical difficulties, entirely beyond my controul, have compelled me to retain a portion of manuscript matter, at least equal in extent to the volume now published, and to stop too abruptly, perhaps, at the capture of Lord Cornwallis and his army. That glorious event, however, constituting a most important and remarkable epoch in the History of our State, I hope that the Reader will indulgently acquiesce in the pause thus suddenly made, not from whim or choice, but from absolute necessity. It is difficult, nay, it is impossible for the historian to determine, at the first glance, the precise limits within which his relation of the events belonging to a given period, may be properly condensed. When Mr. Burk issued his Prospectus, he calculated upon his ability to comprehend in four Octavo volumes, of about 400 pages each, the whole "History of Virginia, from its first settlement to the present day," besides a variety of interesting State papers, and Biographical notices of eminent characters, not only in this State, but throughout the Union. Experience has fully evinced the impracticability of that design, the offspring of an ardent, sanguine, and bold genius. Four volumes are now presented to the public, the last of which, although I have abridged various parts of the main historical matter, and retrenched much from the Appendix, has, owing to the very nature of the subject, been swelled to about six hundred pages; and I do not hesitate to assert that two more volumes (one of which might consist of the M. S. already prepared, and the other of valuable historical documents, and biographical sketches) would scarcely be sufficient to redeem the pledge just alluded to. Indeed, I would not presume to assign any particular bounds to a good History of Virginia. The field is indefinitely vast; and successfully to explore its immense area, and delineate with elegance and accuracy, the many interesting and noble vistas which, as one progresses through it, burst here and there upon the "mind's eye," would require the long continued



exertions of the most vigorous intellect—exertions which pre-suppose the enjoyment of perfect health, and of that liberal leisure which affluence alone can procure. The historian possessed of these rare blessings, might probably do justice to the subject—he might profitably investigate, in the Metropolis, the archives of the State, and, in a tour through the different Counties, usefully collect valuable documents carefully preserved by some families, and by others negligently suffered to moulder away in old trunks, or on dusty shelves. From frequent converse with the few *Revolutionary worthies* yet living, and with other persons, who have acted conspicuous parts on the theatre of public life, he might, in several cases, derive information far preferable to any written documents. The want of an “Historical Society” among us, to embody whatever promises to shed light on our national records, might then be, in some measure, supplied; and if, as I had once fondly contemplated to do, the historian of Virginia should wish to combine with his account of the political, civil and military transactions of the State, a view of its physical circumstances, that is, of its soil, its animals, its vegetable and mineral productions, such a tour would evidently become a matter of absolute necessity. I need not expatiate on the extent, the utility, the splendor of the result: every reflecting mind will easily anticipate the whole.

I am duly sensible that my part of the present publication falls very short of such a result; yet, I cherish a modest hope, that my efforts have not been totally unavailing. Notwithstanding the disadvantages under which I have, as before observed, almost uniformly laboured (disadvantages sufficient to chill all ardor of research, and to neutralize all energy of exertion) I have occasionally been cheered, stimulated, and assisted by auspicious incidents. During my residence in the vicinity of Monticello, I enjoyed the incalculable benefit of a free access to Mr. Jefferson’s Library; and, as his historical collection was no less valuable than extensive, that happy circumstance proved of infinite service to my undertaking. I am also considerably indebted to Chief Justice Marshall, for the obliging loan of various interesting historical works, connected with my subject, and to Mr. William Munford, for his friendly aid, whenever I have found it necessary to consult our national archives. Other Gentlemen are entitled to my warmest acknowledgements, from a similar cause.

WHATEVER judgment the critical reader may pass on my feeble production, he may rest assured that I have been all along “guided by a strict and undeviating regard for truth—animated by an indefatigable ardor of research, and by a generous desire of perpetuating, to the utmost of my individual exertions, that glorious spirit, those admirable and sacred principles, which dictated the measures, and accomplished the exploits recorded in the “*Continuation*.” I deeply regret that the insurmountable typographical difficulties already alluded to, have forced me to reserve for some subsequent publication several fragments and essays intended for the present work—among the rest “a dissertation on the origin and state of parties



in Virginia—a view of the dangers which distantly menace our liberties, especially religious freedom—a synopsis of our revolutionary laws,” which I might, perhaps, have entitled “The philosophy of the American revolution”—a rapid and comparative statement of the physical, moral, intellectual and other circumstances of Virginia, at the conclusion of the revolutionary war, and at the present day—Several speculations on the prospect of measureless improvement still before us—especially on the necessity of amending and generalizing education, so as to place the mass of our citizens on the high ground of moral and intellectual respectability, to capacitate them for every function of self government, and thereby to eradicate those germs of artificial aristocracy which still exist even in our republican soil; because, among us, knowledge is attainable only or chiefly through the medium of wealth, a circumstance which actually *disfranchises* a considerable portion of our population, and threatens the most pernicious consequences. The intrinsic importance of those, and other similar subjects, had led me into digressions, which I thought, and still think, perfectly reconcileable to the nature and objects of “History.”

As it was not in my power to correct and revise every sheet of the “Continuation,” typographical errors have crept into the body of the work, and been permitted to remain there, which the Reader is requested indulgently to excuse. Most of those mistakes are rectified in the *Errata*, at the end of this volume.

L. H. GIRARDIN.

HERMITAGE, NEAR STAUNTON, }  
November 12th, 1816. }





# HISTORY OF VIRGINIA.

---

## CHAPTER I.

---

*First intimation of Dunmore's hostility—Removes the gun-powder from the magazine—Corporation of Williamsburg address him on the subject ; he returns a verbal answer—Contribution subscribed for the Bostonians—Dunmore's letter to the British Ministry—The Governor issues a proclamation—Causes of the governor's alarm—Captain Montague threatens to fire upon York Town—Williamsburg Committee pass resolutions thereupon—Six hundred men assemble at Fredericksburg—Deliver their sentiments for publication, and then retire—The Hanover Volunteers under Patrick Henry march for Williamsburg—The King's receiver-general makes compensation for the seizure of the gun-powder—The Volunteers of Hanover offer their services—not thought necessary—Excellent order preserved during the march of the Hanover Volunteers—The Governor issues a proclamation against P. Henry and his followers—Address to P. Henry—The Council address the People—Patrick Henry escorted by Volunteers on his way to Congress—General Assembly meet—General reflections—Assembly meet—The Governor addresses them in a speech—Assembly return an answer—The assembly request information with respect to the expenditure on the Indian expedition—Partial compliance of the Governor—Assembly appoint a committee to inspect the magazine—Dunmore's conduct thereupon—Assembly resent Dunmore's rudeness—The Council make no communication to the house of Burgesses—The House receive a message from the Governor on the subject of the gun-powder—Resolution to address the Governor—Committee appointed. Resolution never acted upon—The Council address the Governor—The Governor retires on board of a man of war.*

## HISTORY OF

### CHAP.

#### I.

1775

First intimation of Dunmore's hostility, March 28.

Removes the Gun-Powder from the magazine, April 20.

In compiling the history of Virginia from the year 1775, it will be necessary to review some of the transactions related in the last chapter of the 3d volume of Burk's history. I am induced to make this recapitulation, not only because it seems most conformable to unity of design and perspicuity of arrangement to commence at the first open act of hostility committed in Virginia, but also because it is in my power to supply some omissions of my predecessor. I shall proceed therefore to give an ample detail of the events of that period of Virginian History, and also a condensed narrative of the operations of the hostile armies in the other states.

On the 28th of March 1775, Dunmore had issued a proclamation, by command, as he said, of the King, requiring all civil officers to use their utmost exertions to prevent the appointment of deputies from Virginia to the continental congress, which was to assemble at Philadelphia on the 10th of May. This proclamation, by whatever authority issued, had no other effect than to convince the colonists of their governor's hostility. But they did not wait long before they received a much more decided intimation of his evil disposition towards them.

\* Between 3 and 4 o'clock, on Thursday morning, April the 20th. Capt. Collins with a body of men belonging to the Magdalen armed schooner, by the command of Dunmore, came from Burwell's ferry to Williamsburg, and privately removed out of the magazine, and carried on board that schooner, about 20 barrels of gunpowder belonging to the colony

When the morning appeared and this discovery was made, the Common Hall assembled and presented an address to the Governor.

They stated the apprehensions which had been excited by this measure: that the magazine had been erected at

---

\* We have adopted what we deem the most correct authority; for even persons who were on the spot, have varied in their relations of the time when the transaction took place.



the expence of the colony, and appropriated to the safe keeping of the military stores deposited there, from time to time ; that these were intended for the protection of the colony by arming the militia to repel invasions or to suppress insurrections—and that they conceived it to be the only proper repository to which to resort in times of danger, that such times of danger impended over them, as they were informed by reports from various parts of the colony, that the Negroes were ripe for insurrection ; to which diabolical purpose they were instigated by certain wicked & designing men ; \* that from the situation of the magazine, in the centre of the city, they had been exposed to dangers, to ward off which they had kept a strong guard on foot ; that in their critical situation the removal of their principal means of defence was highly alarming ; that they considered themselves the guardians of the city, and requested to be informed for what purpose the gun-powder had been removed, and to solicit that it might be immediately returned.

The governor returned a verbal answer ; that the alarm excited by the reports of an insurrection among the slaves, had caused him to remove the gunpowder, as he did not think it safe where it had been deposited—that in case an insurrection should take place, he would, upon his honor, return it in half an hour ; that he had removed it in the night to prevent alarm, and that captain Collins had his express orders for what he had done ; that he was surprised to hear the people were in commotion ; and, that under such circumstances he did not think it prudent to put arms into their hands.

When the corporation reported this answer to the citizens who had assembled, some with arms, and some without, they peaceably retired to their several homes.

But a report prevailing that the marines were landed and marching to town, they re-assembled under arms at the magazine : here, a patrol for the night being appointed, they retired.

This mild answer of Dunmore breathed a very different spirit from that by which he was really agitated. When he heard that the people were in arms he was excited to the highest degree of passion ; he swore “ by the living God,” † that if any injury was offered to himself or the

## CHAP. I.

Corporation of Williamsburg address him on the subject,

He returns a verbal answer.

---

\* This seems to be an insinuation that Dunmore was secretly at the head, or had some knowledge of these conspiracies.

† Doctor Pasteur's testimony before the committee of the House of Delegates, M S Journal for 1776.

## CHAP.

## I.

Contributions subscribed for the Bostonians.

officers who had acted under his directions, in the affair of the gun powder, he would proclaim freedom to the slaves and reduce Williamsburg to ashes. This savage threat he did not attempt to conceal, but sent it by way of message to many of the principal inhabitants of the town. The fears of some were so far excited as to induce them to send their wives and children into the country.

The citizens of William-burgh having assembled, resolved unanimously to continue their contributions to the Bostonians, and a subscription for that purpose was immediately opened. According to zeal and opulence, these contributions were furnished in greater or smaller proportions, throughout most of the counties of the colony. The receipt of presents which had been previously forwarded is mentioned in a letter from Samuel Adamsto a gentleman in Virginia, dated March 2, 1775. He acknowledges the receipt by captain Tomkins, of the schooner Dunmore, of valuable donations from their friends in Virginia. "We have," says he "repeatedly had abundant evidence of the firmness of our brethren of Virginia in the AMERICAN CAUSE, and have reason to confide in them, that they will struggle hard for the prize now contending for."

Dunmore's letter to the British Ministry.

† At this time was published a communication from Lord Dunmore to the Earl of Dartmouth, dated Williamsburg, December 24, 1774, and laid before the House of Commons by Lord North, February 15, 1775—"The charges brought forward in this communication against the Virginians, were amply and admirably discussed and repelled by the assembly, on behalf of their countrymen, in one of their addresses to Dunmore, as will be seen hereafter. Communications like these had no inconsiderable effect in determining the British ministry to pursue their measures of aggression and hostility against the colonies. Whether this was the effect of depravity of heart which prompted Dunmore to bring on a contest between the mother country and her colonies; or of weakness of understanding, by which, deceived himself, he deceived others, must be left to the searcher of all human hearts to determine. It would seem however, that Dunmore wished to excite a particular irritation against Virginia, from his stating to the ministry that her representatives were fond of having it believed that they originated all measures of opposition.—From whatever cause it proceeded the British ministry were grossly de-

---

† Viz. in the Williamsburg papers of the last week in April '75.



ceived with respect to the feelings and character of the Virginians, and their ability and determination to endure the severest calamities of war, rather than surrender their liberties. The communication before us enumerates the preparations made in Virginia for defence and self government; reasons upon the improbability of her holding out in the contest; and, is in general, filled with misrepresentations, false reasonings, and erroneous calculations.

Whatever might have been Dunmore's opinion with respect to the issue of an appeal to arms between Great Britain and her colonies, he soon became satisfied that such an appeal would be made by the latter rather than submit to taxation without representation. He assembled the council of the colony and addressed them in a speech.

He stated that commotions and insurrections had been suddenly excited which threatened the very existence of the royal government in Virginia; that the removal of the gunpowder from the magazine in Williamsburg had been assigned as the only cause of these agitations; that the uneasiness of the public mind was unreasonable, because the powder was now as accessible for any purpose of legal defence, as if it was still in Williamsburg; that a settled purpose had been formed to subvert the regal government, and substitute another in its place.—He called upon the council for their advice in this emergency; submitted to their consideration the propriety of issuing a proclamation, recalling the people to a sense of their duty, and reminding them of the dangers to which they exposed themselves, by resisting the constituted authorities. The Council informed the Governor that as the subject which he had submitted to their consideration was of great importance, they would take time to deliberate upon it.

The Council assembled at the palace the next day and advised the Governor to issue a proclamation of the following character, which he accordingly did.

He reiterated the charges contained in his address to the council: repeated the denunciation that there were certain persons disaffected to the regal government, and who, from their weight with the people, were endeavouring to bring about a change, underpretence of defending their liberties: The reasons which he had before verbally given for the cause and manner of the removal of the gunpowder from Williamsburg, he now repeated with the technical formality and amplitude which an official paper of the kind might seem to require; he declared his readiness to return the powder when the ferment then existing should have subsided, and when, either by inva-

May 3.  
The Governor issues a proclamation.

**CHAP. I.** sion or insurrection, the circumstances of the colony should render it safe and expedient : he endeavored to excite the fears of the people by adverting to the defenceless situation of the colony, and the dangers to be apprehended from the destructive and desolating inroads of the savages, which he declared they were upon the eve of renewing : he concluded with many asseverations of his desire to restore peace and harmony to the distracted country.

Causes of  
th govern  
or's alarm.

The apprehension and alarm for the safety of the colonial government, expressed in the speech and proclamation of the Governor, were by no means groundless. Every county in the province was more or less animated with the spirit of patriotism, and resistance to tyranny. The associations for non importation had been carried into operation with the utmost rigor. A committee was chosen in every county, whose business it was to see that the articles of association were carried into effect. The powers of these committees not being defined were almost unlimited. They examined the books of merchants, in order to ascertain whether they imported prohibited articles, or, in consequence of the scarcity of the times, sold their merchandize at a higher price than usual.—When prohibited articles were imported, they were sold, and the value returned to the owner ; if there was any surplus, it was added to the fund provided for the sufferers at Boston. If they took advantage of the necessities of the people, and sold their articles at a higher price than usual, they were advertised as unfriendly to their country.\* They kept a vigilant eye upon the conduct of every inhabitant without distinction, and such as were suspected they sent for into their presence, and interrogated them upon every subject which they deemed connected with the public welfare. Such as were found to be disaffected—refused to take the prescribed oath of fidelity—or join the non-importation association—were disarmed, advertised, held up to the odium of the people, and underwent a species of political and social excommunication, as it was considered infamous to be seen in the company of a man disaffected to the American cause. In some cases fines were imposed and these were added to the fund before mentioned. In no case was actual violence used or attempted, by the committees on the body of the people ; on the contrary, the strictest attention, not only to the peace of society, but the morals of individuals

---

\* Manuscript proceedings of the committee for the county of Northumberland, in my possession. From the transaction of one county, we may form a general character of the whole.



seems to have been observed. Such as were found guilty of gaming, drinking, or rioting in any manner, were arraigned before the committee, publicly censured and fined.—Their regulations were strictly observed and carried into rigorous execution; and from their decision there was no appeal. A few only of the most obnoxious Virginian Tories were sent into a mild exile, beyond the mountains, by the general committee of safety at Williamsburg.

But the county committees did not confine their views to these objects only: they anticipated measures of defence for the hostility meditated against them, by enlisting, training, officering and as far as practicable, arming the independent companies and minutemen in each county.\* Lord Dunmore suggested, in his letter to the British ministry, that these independent companies were formed for the purpose of protecting the several committees, and if occasion required, to act against the government. This latter object was disavowed by the General Assembly in one of their addresses to the governor. It is sufficiently certain now however, that such was the design in forming companies of armed men; if men in their situation could be called *armed men*. Dunmore added, “they have proceeded so far in one county as to bind their independent company by an oath to execute all the orders of the “committee.” This likewise was positively denied by the Assembly, and various other public bodies, and seems to be improbable, as the name of the county is not specified. In truth every county in Virginia was a sort of little commonwealth; governed by their own local regulations enacted by men of their own choice, arming for their own particular defence, electing their own officers, submitting to a county poll tax for the purpose of purchasing arms, ammunition and military stores, and acknowledging one supreme provincial head in the general committee of safety at Williamsburg: and this provincial head itself forming only one of thirteen federal members, all acknowledging the collective wisdom and sagacity of a general congress of the thirteen United Colonies.—For the first

---

\* From the arms reported and returned by three companies in the county of Northumberland, some idea may be formed of the situation of the counties below tidewater, in this respect. 1st Company—26 firelocks, *one bayonet*, *two cartridge boxes*, four swords, two halberds, 1 pair of colors, 1 drum, 29 hunting shirts, 29 pair of leggings, 52 blankets, 10 Kettle, 1 Canteen. 2d company—15 firelocks, *one bayonet*; 25 hunting shirts. 3d Company—14 firelocks, 10 bayonets, 10 cartridge boxes; yet Northumberland is a large, opulent and populous county.

CHAP. time the sublime spectacle was exhibited to the world, of  
 1. a nation in the infancy of its population, crushing the serpent of tyranny, and declaring to mankind the grand truth, that liberty and equality, founded upon the basis of a federal democracy, know not the confinement of territorial limits. Such was the situation of Virginia when Dunmore conveyed the powder from the magazine in Williamsburg.

When this event reached the country it produced the utmost commotion among the people. They looked up to their committees, assembled on the occasion, for directions how to act, and by what means to obtain redress ; for the question of redress seems generally to have been agitated among the people, and debated in the committees.—— Spirited and patriotic resolutions were every where adopted. It was resolved that the removal of the powder was illegal ; and in some cases a much harsher epithet was used ; that it ought to be returned ; that the governor by this act as well as other parts of his conduct, had forfeited all title to the confidence of the people of Virginia — they offered premiums to such as produced the best gun powder, made of the materials of the colony ; and also to such as produced the best wool ; they resolved to abstain from the use of mutton or lamb as food, that the breed of sheep might increase the faster, and a greater portion of wool be afforded ; and in general passed wise and salutary regulations, for the safety of the colony, the security of their liberties, and the encouragement of domestic manufactures.

The resolutions of the different committees throughout the colony, in which they were zealously supported by the people ; the open manner in which the Governor was pronounced by the voice of that people to have lost their confidence ; the bold spirit of opposition and determined resistance manifested in the resolve that *the powder ought to be returned*, which was plainly speaking the language of retaliation and redress—operating together upon the governor's mind, produced the address to the council and the proclamation before mentioned to the people.

May 6.

The governor, as we have seen, had advised with his council on the propriety of issuing a proclamation recalling the people to a sense of their duty. &c ; and the council, upon deliberation, advised him to issue one, (whose character we have seen,) and indeed presented him with the draught of that which he did issue. Instead of recalling the people to a sense of what Dunmore thought their duty, the proclamation had a very great effect in recalling the people to what they themselves considered as their duty. They felt themselves injured and



insulted by the opprobrious language it contained, and they hastened to repel by public resolves, the indecent and indiscreet charge that they were in a state of insurrection and open defiance of all legal authority. By this impolitic address the Governor increased the enthusiasm of the Virginians. To a settled opinion of the justice of their cause, were now superadded the exasperation of wounded pride, and insulted feelings.

The proclamation had scarcely made its appearance, when some persons privately entered the magazine, in the night time, and conveyed away a great number of guns, cartouch boxes, swords, canteens, &c. Two days\* afterwards the mayor, aldermen and common-council assembled and expressed their disapprobation of this transaction. They required the inhabitants of the town to prevent such unlawful proceedings for the future, and exhorted those in possession of the arms to return them to the magazine.

May 8.

Scarcely a week passed without the occurrence of some circumstance calculated to increase the mutual irritation of Dunmore and the people.

An event had now happened which carried the exacerbation of his spirit to its highest pitch. A party of armed men whose movements it will presently be our business to relate, had arrived at no great distance from Williamsburg, with the avowed intention of making a reprisal for the stolen gunpowder, and of securing the treasury. As soon as Dunmore heard this he despatched a messenger to the Fowey man of war, lying off York-Town, and a detachment of 40 sailors and marines, under the command of captain Stretch was sent to his aid. They were not marched through the streets, but by the way of the Governor's park. After the detachment was landed, Colonel Nelson received a letter from Montague, Captain of the ship Fowey threatening that if the detachment was attacked or molested on its march, he would fire upon York-Town. This threat excited so much alarm among the inhabitants that many of them removed into the country with their families. Captain Montague's letter was couched in the following terms.

Capt. Montague threatens to fire upon York-Town.

“Fowey, May 4, 1775.

“Sir,

“I have this morning received certain information, that his excellency the Lord Dunmore, Governor of Virginia, is threatened with an attack at day

\* The next morning a warrant was issued to search certain suspected places, but the search was without success.

## CHAP.

I.

break this morning, at his palace in Williamsburg, and have thought proper to send a detachment from his majesty's ship under my command, to support his excellency, therefore, strongly pray you to make use of every endeavour to prevent the party from being molested or attacked, as in that case I must be under the necessity to fire upon this town."

From

GEORGE MONTAGUE.

To The Hon. THOMAS NELSON.

Williamsburg committee passes resolutions thereupon.

When this letter reached Williamsburg it excited the strongest emotions. The committee met and passed resolutions on the subject, highly expressive of their indignation and sense of injury.

They stated that captain Montague evinced a spirit of cruelty, unexampled in the annals of civilized nations, in threatening to fire upon a town, which might not be implicated if an attack had been made on the detachment; that in his late communication to the President, he had added insult to barbarity—because it was sent too late to afford any opportunity for the exertion of colonel Nelson's influence, had any disposition been manifested to *molest or attack* the detachment—because the person to whom it was sent, would have been the greatest sufferer, in case the town had been fired on, and was moreover, at that very moment exerting all his influence for the governor's personal safety :—that considering these circumstances, Montague had "discovered the most HELLISH principles that can actuate a human mind." They recommended it to the inhabitants of the town and county, not to shew any mark of civility to captain Montague further than common decency required.

Although the impression made by the removal of the gunpowder from the magazine at Williamsburg, on board a British ship, was simultaneous, in every section of the colony, yet the enthusiasm which it inspired, and the resistance immediately to be made, necessarily varied widely, in different parts of the colony according to local circumstances, and the phlegm or ardor of men's temperaments.

Six hundred men assemble at Fredericksburg.

More than six hundred men, well armed and disciplined, as they state themselves to have been, assembled at Fredericksburg & despatched some gentlemen \* from Spotsylvania and Hanover, to Williamsburg, to ascertain the

\* Purdie's paper mentions but one—Mann Page, Jr. Esq. one of the delegates from the county of Spotsylvania. This must have been the late Mann Page of Mansfield, near Fredericksburg, not less distinguished for his talents than his patriotism. In every thing that constitutes the gentleman, he had no superior. It was

CHAP.  
I.

situation of the metropolis, with an offer, if assistance was necessary, to march down, at a moments warning, with two thousand men. These gentlemen returned with an answer that the town was quiet, and that for the present, it was best policy to abstain from open violence.

The conduct of the troops assembled at Fredericksburg cannot be too highly applauded. Intrepid without temerity, ardent in their love of liberty without any exhibition of licentiousness, they retired at the voice of discretion and prudence. (as it was then thought,) with a tranquillity and attention to order, not inferior to the enthusiastic spirit with which they had assembled.

Before they retired a council was held, in the committee chamber, at Fredericksburg, at which were present one hundred and two members, consisting of Delegates of the provincial congress, officers, and special deputies from fourteen companies of Light Horse, composing a body of upwards of six hundred men.—Here a production which had been prepared, in the form of advice, was presented, agreed to, and published. It was of a bolder character than any composition which had yet appeared. It was almost tantamount to a declaration of independence. It spoke of the ruling powers without the humility and courtly ceremony usually preserved upon such occasions. It contained no evasive language, but with a firm and even forward spirit avows the intention of the troops to preserve their liberty at the hazard of their lives and fortunes.

Deliver  
their senti-  
ments for  
publication  
and then  
retire,

They stated the facts already mentioned, the cause of their alarm, and the manner in which it had been removed. They condemned the conduct of the governor, as ill-timed, impolitic, unnecessary and unjust. They declared, that the private virtues of a governor, (for which, however, Dunmore seems not to have been distinguished,) were no security against oppressive systems of government. They deprecated the evils of a civil war, and, preferring peace, as long as the least hope of an honorable adjustment should remain, advised the return of the troops to their several homes.

They considered, however, the liberties of America to be in danger, from the hostility manifested by the British mi-

---

impossible to mention his name, without speaking in his praise, and his venerated memory amply merits this passing tribute of respect. He conveyed a letter from Peyton Randolph, Speaker of the late House of Delegates, which influenced the gentlemen assembled at Fredericksburg to retire.



## CHAP.

## I.

nistry, and being firmly resolved to resist all attempts against their rights and privileges, from whatever quarter they might be assailed, they pledged themselves to each other, to be in readiness, at a moment's warning, to *re-assemble, and BY FORCE OF ARMS, to defend the laws, the liberties, and the rights of this, OR ANY SISTER COLONY, from unjust and wicked invasion.*

They then directed despatches to be sent to the troops assembled at the Bowling-green; to those from the counties of Berkely, Frederick, Dunmore, and from such other counties as were then on their march, to return them thanks for their cheerful offers of service, and to acquaint them with the determination which they had taken.

This address was read at the head of each company, and warmly and unanimously approved. It concluded with these impressive words—

**“GOD SAVE THE LIBERTIES OF AMERICA.”\***

I shall now relate the event before alluded to, which occasioned Dunmore to send to a British man of war for a detachment to his assistance, and the threat from Captain Montague, that he would fire upon York Town, if that detachment was attacked or molested.

The design with which the troops had been assembled at Fredericksburg and elsewhere, was accomplished principally by the volunteers of one county, and in a great measure through the instrumentality of one man.\*

† The committee of safety for the county of Hanover met at New-Castle, and recommended that reprisals should be made upon the king's property, sufficient to indemnify

May 2,  
The Hanover volunteers under

---

\* Fredericksburg, Committee chamber, Saturday the 29th of April, 1775.

\* Patrick Henry.

† In a conversation which I had with then, Ensign, now Col. Goodall, he differs from the account of this transaction which I have given in the text; but I have chosen rather to follow the accounts printed at the time, which in three different newspapers are word for word the same, than trust to the uncertainty of human recollection. Col. Goodall's account is this. The volunteers of Hanover were accustomed to meet at South Anna Bridge where they were trained. P. Henry on his way to Congress, was met at Col. W. O. Winston's by a committee from the volunteers, who proposed to Henry to make reprisals upon the King's property, *as the county committee of safety, declined to take any step in the business.* Henry not only advised them to carry their proposition into effect, but declared that he would turn back and march to Williamsburg with them. In the remainder of the narrative all are agreed. In the origin of the expedition there is an important difference; according to one, it originated with the county committee of safety; according to the other the county committee of safety would have nothing to say to it. And it emanated entirely from the volunteers. The authority of Goodall is followed, as it respects the appointment of officers.

the colony, for the loss sustained at the magazine in Williamsburg. In pursuance of this recommendation, the volunteers of Hanover assembled at New-Castle, and elected their officers—Patrick Henry, Captain; Samuel Meredith, 1st Lieutenant; Richard Morris, 2d Lieutenant; and Parke Goodall, Ensign. Patrick Henry, detached Ensign Goodall, with sixteen men, to seize and detain Colonel Richard Corbin, the King's deputy receiver-general, until satisfaction was received. This movement it was supposed could be effected, without retarding the progress of the main body, which under Henry was to proceed to Williamsburg.

The detachment under Goodall advanced, according to orders, to Laneville in King & Queen county, the seat of the receiver-general and surrounding the house, demanded the King's money, for the powder which Dunmore had taken out of the magazine. The receiver not being at home, Mrs. Corbin appeared and informed them that the king's money was never kept there, but at his office in Williamsburg, where, also she told them, was her husband.\* Upon this

CHAP.  
I.

Patrick  
Henry  
march for  
Williams-  
burg.

\* The venerable daughter of the receiver general and relict of the late Colonel Braxton is still living, and was an eye witness to the scene at Laneville and had no doubt often heard her husband recount his interviews with Patrick Henry, during this transaction. I have relied upon this most respectable authority in stating that Laneville was surrounded, and that the lady of the house had an interview, or rather held a conference with the volunteers. Upon the same authority, I will here relate some *minutæ*, which I did not think proper to embody into the text. About the time that Patrick Henry set out on his expedition to Williamsburg, Colonel Braxton happened to be at Colonel Pendleton's, where between 3 and 4 hundred men had assembled, to consult in what manner to proceed in order to get the money for the powder. The delegates were now also at Colonel Pendleton's; and Colonel Braxton was a witness to the counsel which they gave the people to return peaceably to their homes; upon the strength of this precedent, he supposed that he could persuade Mr. Henry to do the same by his men -- but Mr. Henry insisted upon it that the money should be returned before he would disband his troops. Upon this, Mr. Braxton proposed to go to Colonel Corbin if Mr. Henry would remain quiet at Doncastle's until his return. Mr. Braxton recollects to the recollection of Mr. Henry, the many innocent persons who would suffer by his precipitate entrance into Williamsburg, as Dunmore had planted cannon at his palace, with a determination to fire on the town, the very moment that one hostile Virginian should enter it, while, at the signal of this event, the men of war lying at York, had also determined to perpetrate the same atrocity. At last, Mr. Henry agreed to remain at Doncastle's, and negotiate through the medium of Mr. Braxton. The latter accordingly repaired to the receiver-general at Williamsburg, who informed him that he had lent what money there was in the office to Mr. Nicholas the treasurer, but that to pay Henry's demand, he would give an order on Nicholas. Mr. Braxton replied that Mr. Henry preferred a bill, which the receiver declining to give, Mr. Nelson gave a bill on Philadelphia, and took the order on the treasurer for payment. Mr. Brax-

CHAP. information Goodall's party continued their march and joined the main body at Doncastle's tavern, about 16 miles from Williamsburg, on the 3d instant, at sunset—Late the same night, Colonel Carter Braxton arrived in Williamsburg with the intelligence. In their march they had been joined by volunteers from the counties of King William & New Kent, & amounted to more than 150 men, all said to be men of property, well accoutred, & exhibiting a very martial appearance. Early the next morning, Col. Braxton returned, & Patrick Henry, receiving adequate compensation for the powder taken out of the magazine, the volunteers proceeded no farther than Doncastle's, and the affair was settled. Henry gave the following receipt for the money advanced as a compensation for the powder taken out of the magazine:—

Doncastle's Ordinary, New Kent, May 4, 1775, received from the honorable Richard Corbin Esq. his majesty's receiver general, 380 pounds, as a compensation for the gun powder lately taken out of the public magazine by the Governor's order; which money I promise to convey to the Virginia Delegates at the General Congress, to be under their direction, laid out in gun powder for the colony's use, and to be stored as they shall direct, until the next colony convention, or General Assembly, unless it shall be necessary, in the mean time, to use the same in defence of this colony. It is agreed that in case the next convention shall determine that any part of the said money ought to be returned to his majesty's said receiver general, that the same shall be done accordingly."

PATRICK HENRY, jun.

TEST.

SAMUEL MEREDITH.

PARKE GOODALL.

[.1 True Copy.]

This business being thus settled, the commanding officer wrote the following letter, and sent it by express.

"Sir,

" May 4, 1775.

The Vol-  
unteers of  
Hanover  
offer their

" The affair of the powder is now settled, so as to produce satisfaction to me, and I earnestly wish, to the colony in general. The people here have it in charge from the Hanover committee\* to tender their service to you as

ton and Mr. Nelson then returned to Mr. Henry at Doncastle's, and with much difficulty prevailed upon him to take the bill as a payment for the powder, and disperse his men to their several homes.

\* In the printed Copy before me, the word *the* before Hanover Committee is omitted, but it appearing to be a manifest error I have corrected it. Mr. Henry mentions no other volunteers but those of Hanover; it would seem from this that no others were with him;



a public officer, for the purpose of escorting the public treasury to any place in this colony where the money would be judged more safe than in the city of Williamsburg.— The reprisal now made by the Hanover volunteers, though accomplished in a manner least liable to the imputation of violent extremity, may possibly be the cause of future injury to the treasury. If therefore you apprehend the least danger, a sufficient guard is at your service. I beg the return of the bearer may be instant, because the men wish to know their destination.

With great regard I am, sir,

Your most humble servant,

PATRICK HENRY, Jr.

To ROBERT CARTER NICHOLAS, Esq. Treasurer.

CHAP.  
I.

service to  
guard the  
treasury.

To this the Treasurer returned an answer, that he did not apprehend there was any necessity for the proposed guard, and that the minds of the people of Williamsburg, were perfectly quiet.\* Upon this the volunteers, considering that there would shortly be a general congress, or a colony convention, returned to their respective homes, to wait the farther direction of one or the other of these bodies.

It appears that the strictest attention to discipline was exhibited during this expedition; that peremptory orders were repeatedly given to avoid every appearance of violence, injury, or insult, to the persons or property of every one; and, that in executing the plan of reprisal, upon the king's servants, bloodshed, if possible, was to be avoided. These facts are found in extracts from the proceedings of the committee of safety for Hanover county, published at the time. A meeting of this committee was held on the 9th of May, at the court house, in which they returned their thanks to their county volunteers,† and also to those of such other counties as had embodied themselves, and were marching to their aid.

Excellent  
order pre-  
served dur-  
ing the  
march of  
the Han-  
over volun-  
teers.

Two days after the date of the above transactions, as

it was asserted, however, in the public prints, on the day that those of King William and New-Kent were with him: from which authority I have thought myself warranted in so stating it. Mr. Henry says he had it in charge from the Hanover committee; from this it appears that the expedition was undertaken, and the reprisal made at their recommendation.

\* This assertion of the treasurer that the minds of the people of Williamsburg were perfectly quiet, must be understood with some modifications; more than one hundred of its citizens, at that very time paroled the streets and guarded the treasury in the night.

† This is positive testimony that the expedition and reprisal was sanctioned by the county committee of safety for Hanover county.

# CHAP. I.

The Governor issues a proclamation against Patrick Henry and his followers.

conducted by Patrick Henry, the governor issued a proclamation. He stated that a certain Patrick Henry of the county of Hanover, and a number of deluded followers, had taken up arms, chosen their officers, and styling themselves an independent company, marched out of their county, encamped and put themselves in a posture of war; that they had written and despatched letters to many parts of the country, exciting the people to join in their outrageous and rebellious practices, to the terror of the king's faithful subjects, and in open defiance of law and government; that they had committed other acts of violence—particularly by extorting from the receiver general the sum of 330*l*, under pretence of replacing the powder which he had thought proper to order from the magazine—from all which he inferred that there was no longer any security for the life or property of any man: He therefore issued his proclamation to all persons, upon their allegiance, not to aid, abet or give countenance to the said Patrick Henry, or any others concerned in such combinations, but on the contrary to oppose them, as they would otherwise draw upon themselves the vengeance of offended majesty, and the insulted law.

Address to  
Patrick  
Henry

But the effect which Patrick Henry's expedition had wrought upon the feelings and conduct of the governor, was very different from that which it produced upon the people. In several counties they assembled and expressed their sentiments upon the occasion. They announced to the public their approbation in warm terms, and voted their cordial thanks to Patrick Henry and the volunteers of Hanover for their prudent and spirited conduct in making a reprisal upon the King's property, as an indemnification for the powder taken out of the magazine.\*

About the middle of May, Captain Montague's detach-

---

\* The committee for Orange county, met on Tuesday the 9th of May, taking into their consideration the removal of the powder from the public magazine, and the compensation obtained by the independent company of Hanover; and observing also, that the receipt given by Capt. Patrick Henry, to his majesty's Receiver General, refers the final disposal of the money to the next colony convention, came into the following resolutions:

1. That the Governor's removal of the powder lodged in the magazine, and set apart for the defence of the country, was fraudulent, unnecessary, and extremely provoking to the people of this colony.
2. That the resentment shewn by the Hanover volunteers, and the reprisal they have made on the King's property, highly merit the approbation of the public, and the thanks of his committee.
3. That if any attempt should be made at the ensuing convention to have the money returned to his majesty's Receiver General, our delegates be, and they are hereby instructed, to exert all their

ment of marines left Williamsburg, and returned on board the Fowey man of war.

At this time a council was held at the capitol, at which an address was agreed to and afterwards published; it was signed by the clerk of the council by order of that body. It is not easy to account for the motive which prompted the council to frame and publish this address.— If its ostensible object was to soothe the feelings of the people, its real effect was very different. That irritation which the governor's proclamation had excited against him was now extended to the council; and indeed they had been before censured for advising the governor to issue a proclamation of the nature and character of the one alluded to. Their address was now couched in strong intemperate language; they express their "detestation and abhorrence for that licentious and ungovernable spirit that had gone forth and misled the once happy people of this country."

It was thus that this body permitted itself to speak of that glorious spirit of liberty which at that time glowed alike in every Virginian bosom. Henceforward the council was considered as the enemy of liberty, and the abettor of tyranny, and became scarcely less odious, in the eyes of the people, than Dunmore himself.

Patrick Henry was now at the zenith of his popularity. He was this year a delegate from the colony of Virginia, to the continental congress which was to meet in Philadelphia, and on the 11th of May he commenced his journey

CHAP.  
I.

The council address the people.

Patrick Henry escorted by volunteer on his way

influence, in opposing such attempt, and in having the money laid out for the use of the colony.

4. That the following address be presented to Captain Patrick Henry, and the gentlemen independents of Hanover.

GENTLEMEN,

We the committee for the county of Orange, having been fully informed of your seasonable and spirited proceedings in procuring a compensation for the powder fraudulently taken from the county magazine, by command of Lord Dunmore, and which it evidently appears his Lordship, notwithstanding his assurances, had no intention to restore, entreat you to accept their cordial thanks for this testimony of your zeal for the honor and interest of your country. We take this occasion, also, to give it as our opinion, that the blow struck in the Massachusetts government, is a hostile attack on this and every other colony, and a sufficient warrant to use violence and reprisal, in all cases where it may be expedient for our security and welfare.

James Madison, Chairman; James Taylor; Thomas Barbour; Zachariah Burnley; Rowland Thomas; James Madison jr; William Moore; James Walker; Lawrence Taliaferro; Henry Scott; Thomas Bill.



## CHAP.

## I.

to congress

from Hanover. Upon this occasion he was escorted by a number of young gentlemen from Hanover, King William and Caroline. They attended him as far as Hooe's ferry, on the Potomac, and after having paid him military honors a guard attended him across the river, and saw him safely landed on the Maryland shore. This escort was not an idle ceremony; serious apprehensions had been entertained that Dunmore would endeavor to seize the delegation from the colony over which he presided, and thus prevent that important section of the united colonies from being represented in their common council.

1775,  
June 1.  
General  
assembly  
meet

The Governor of Virginia had now issued a proclamation convening the general Assembly. This was unexpected & indeed unhopd for. The publications of the day averred that he had previously been deaf to the entreaties of the council to assemble the legislature, and that "the summons came from Lord North." It was recommended in the popular prints of the day, that every member of the house of Burgesses, should repair to Williamsburg "prepared as an American." This intimation has been construed to mean, that they should assemble in arms, and be clad in uniform. I am not prepared to assert that this admonition was obeyed, to the extent of the construction given it; but it will appear in the sequel that they did indeed convene with a truly American spirit.

I have heard orally, but from authority which does not warrant my hazarding the statement here, that some of the members were armed with rifles and in hunting shirts.— This precaution if it was really taken, is said to have been intended to guard against the seizure and transportation of some of the most conspicuous members of that illustrious body. But there is no evidence before me that the governor meditated such a project. According to the governor's proclamation, the general Assembly of Virginia convened, in Williamsburg, on Thursday the first day of June, 1775, and Lord Dunmore addressed them in a speech.

General  
reflections

With this speech commenced a political correspondence, between the Governor and the House of Burgesses, which notwithstanding its extreme length, I shall give entire — It contains interesting and important matter for the consideration and reflection of the statesman and philosopher, and it has moreover, been pretermitted by all preceding historians.

Taking this correspondence in an abstract point of view, it contains no weak or inelegant exposition of the political privileges of mankind in general: and taken in a practical point of view, by far the most close and animated examination, and by far the most clear and forcible defence, of the rights of what was then termed British America, that

I have ever had an opportunity of perusing. The soundest arguments are there clothed in a language the most chaste and simple.

There has not reached us, from antiquity, among the various struggles for liberty in the republics of Greece and Italy, any documents with which these can be fairly compared; but the resolutions and addresses, drawn up and published, by the English parliament, and the French convention during the periods of their respective revolutions, would suffer by a comparison with the resolutions and addresses of the House of Burgesses of Virginia. They have this peculiar merit.

Composed in the tumult of a popular assembly, highly irritated at the insulting deportment of the deputy, and the despotic designs of his master—they possess the perspicuity and precision of the most laboured productions of the closet politician.

I have omitted the courtly forms and ceremonies with which these resolutions were drafted and presented; but I trust that I have retained their substance and spirit.—— Most frequently, indeed the very language itself is preserved.

Dunmore now addressed in a set speech the House of Burgesses. \* He stated that he had called them together

1775,  
June 1,  
Assembly

---

\* By the first act of the session of the 13th of March, 1659, the general Assembly, or as it was then termed "the Grand Assembly," declared "that the supreme power of the government of this country, shall be resident in the Assembly," &c.

*Statutes at Large, Vol. 1, page 530.*

Perhaps it will amuse the curious reader to observe the formality with which the General Assembly was opened under the regal government. The mode of administering the oaths to the individual members was not very different from what it is at present: formerly the governor appointed commissioners from among the council to administer the oaths: now this duty can be performed by any single member of the council.

The oaths being administered "the members repaired to their seats in the House of Burgesses."

"After which a message was delivered by John Blair, Esquire, Clerk of the General Assembly:

"GENTLEMEN,

"The Governor commands this House to attend his Excellency immediately in the Council chamber."

"Accordingly the House went up to attend his Excellency in the Council chamber, where his Excellency was pleased to say to them

"Gentlemen of the House of Burgesses;

"You must return again to your House, and immediately proceed to the choice of a Speaker.

"And the House being returned;

Henry Lee, Esquire, one of the members from the county of Prince William, addressing himself to the clerk (who, standing up, pointed to him, and then sat down) moved that Peyton Randolph,

CHAP. I. at that particular time, in order to afford them an opportunity of meeting the advances of the parent state, contained

Esquire, should take the chair of this House, as Speaker, which office he had before filled with such distinguished abilities, steadiness and impartiality, as had given entire satisfaction to the public: and thereupon.

"Mr. Randolph was elected without opposition, and was taken out of his place by two members, who led him from thence to the chair; and having ascended the uppermost step, and standing there Mr. Randolph returned his thanks to the House for placing him again in that elevated station; and assured them that as he had gained their favorable opinion, of which their unanimous suffrage on this and other occasions was a testimony equally convincing and honorable, so he would studiously endeavor to preserve it, by a strict attention to, and faithful discharge of, his duty in any department the public should think him worthy to serve them in; adding that he doubted not the House would judge of his future conduct with their wonted candor, and would support him with their assistance more especially necessary at this critical season.

"And thereupon he sat down in the chair; and then the mace, (which before lay under the table) was laid upon the table.

"Ordered that a message be sent to the Governor to acquaint his Excellency, that this house, in obedience to his commands, have made choice of a Speaker, and to know his pleasure when they shall attend to present him; and that Mr. Henry Lee, and Mr. Treasurer do wait upon him \* with the said message.

"They accordingly withdrew, and being returned, Mr. Treasurer reported, that the governor was pleased to say he would send an answer by a messenger of his own.

"A message from the Governor by Mr. Blair:

"Mr. Speaker,

"The Governor commands this House to attend his Excellency immediately in the Council chamber.

"Accordingly Mr. Speaker elect, with the House, went up to attend his Excellency in the Council chamber; and he was pleased to declare his approbation of their choice.

"Then Mr. Speaker did, in the name and on behalf of the House, lay claim to all their antient rights and privileges, particularly a freedom of speech and debate, exemption from arrests, and protection for their estates; and lastly, for himself, requested that his errors might not be imputed to the House.

"The Governor answered, that he should take care to defend them in all their just rights and privileges.

"The House being returned,

"Mr. Speaker reported, that the House had attended the Governor in the Council chamber; where his Excellency was pleased to approve the choice they had made of him to be their Speaker, and to grant and allow to them, upon petition of claim made by him to his Excellency, in the name and on behalf of the House of Burgesses, all their antient rights and privileges; particularly a freedom of speech and debate, exemption from arrests, and protection for their estates.

"Mr. Speaker also reported, that the Governor was pleased to make a speech to the Council and this House; of which Mr. Speaker said he had, to prevent mistakes, obtained a copy; which he read to the House," &c. &c.

\* Obviously omitted.



CHAP.  
I.

in the joint address of the Lords and Commons of the 7th of February, and the resolution of the House of Commons of the 27th, by which it appeared that their well founded grievances, if properly represented, would certainly be redressed ; that the object of the parliament was not to oppress, but protect the colonies—not to injure one part of the British empire for the benefit of another, but to provide equally for the common defence of the whole ; for the accomplishment of which object, he trusted Virginia would bear her part.

He then, according to parliamentary etiquette, addressed the House of Burgesses separately.

He made demand of no specific sum, that their gift, if they should offer any, might be entirely free. He said that the civil government of the colony being already provided for, it only remained for them to declare what portion of the general burden they were willing to bear—a burden which on former occasions, the mother country had cheerfully borne, for her defenceless colonies. He said that he was warranted in declaring to them that they would never be required to tax themselves, unless the subjects of Great Britain were taxed by parliament, on the same occasion, in a much greater proportion, and that any precaution, which they might think proper to observe, in that particular, could not be disapproved.

He recommended to them to imitate the justice and moderation of the House of Commons in their resolution declaring what was expected from the colonies, and assured them that by so doing they would manifest their reverence for Parliament and loyalty to the King.

He also recommended to them to devise some plan for paying the officers and soldiers engaged in repelling the last irruption of the savages, as their services, he did not doubt, would be thought worthy of attention.

Again, as he had commenced, he addressed the two Houses jointly. He stated his willingness to concur in all proper measures for restoring the public peace and tranquillity ; that his ready assent should be given to all laws having those objects in view ; and recommended the opening the courts of justice as tending to those ends.

He concluded by exhorting them, in the most earnest manner, to enter upon the important business before them, with patience, calmness and impartiality ; and trusted that the benefits which they had received from the parent state would animate them to use their most zealous efforts, in restoring harmony and mutual confidence between the two countries.

This speech was ordered to lie on the table for the perusal of the members, and the following day appointed to

meet. The governor addresses them in a speech.

**CHAP.** take it into consideration. On Friday the 2d of June, the  
**I.** House of Burgesses Resolved, that an address be present-  
 ed to his excellency the governor, to assure his Lordship  
 that they would immediately take into their most serious  
 consideration, the several important matters contained in  
 his excellency's speech to the council and that house, and  
 proceed with that coolness and deliberation which ought  
 ever to influence the councils of a free and loyal people." In conformity with this resolution a committee was appointed to draw up an address to be presented to the governor; which committee consisted of Messieurs Nicholas, Mercer, J.ffer on, Henry Lee, Munford, Dandridge, Nelson, Jones, Cary, Francis Lightfoot Lee, Whiting, and Charles Carter of Stafford. On Monday the 5th, the committee reported their address to the House, and it was agreed to unanimously. It was likewise resolved, that the address should be presented by the whole house. This was no doubt intended to give it an adventitious importance and solemnity, in addition to that to which it was really entitled by its merits. It was very unlike the servile echoes, to speeches and messages which we have disgustingly witnessed of late years. It was couched in firm, dignified and commanding language, and told the governor truths which his lordly ears never received with patience.

Assembly  
 return an  
 answer.

In this address the House of Burgesses said, that they availed themselves of the opportunity now afforded them, of expressing their great concern at the alarming situation of the country, which they attributed to the measures adopted by the British Ministry.

They declared their allegiance to their king unshaken, and their attachment to his government, as founded on the laws and constitutions of the British Empire, unabated.

They observed that they would take the most speedy measures for defraying the expences of the late expedition against the Indians; and that the non payment of the gallant officers and soldiers, was not to be imputed to them, as this was the first opportunity which the governor had afforded them of paying proper attention to the subject.

They said that the occlusion of the courts of justice could only be ascribed to a combination of untoward and distressing incidents, which they had long and deeply lamented. That these courts had been established by different acts of the General Assembly. That the fees of the officers of justice had been settled by an express act of the legislature, which had existed and been continued, with amendments, as the fluctuation of affairs rendered necessary through a long course of time. That the House of Burgesses in May, 1774, finding that the fee-bill had expired, and that other valuable acts were near expiring, had pro-

CHAP.  
I.

ceeded to the revival and continuance of them, when their endeavors to discharge those and other important duties to their country, were arrested, and cut short, by a sudden and unexpected dissolution of the Assembly. Since that period their situation had undergone a total change. For just and well known reasons, this country, as well as her sister colonies, had been driven to the necessity of suspending their commerce with Great Britain, Ireland and the West Indies. There still, however remained, within the line of parliamentary regulations, several other valuable branches of export to different parts of the world, which they hoped would have enabled the inhabitants of this country to discharge their debts more expeditiously than they could have done "by continuing their usual exports and exceeding imports,"\* to and from Great Britain; so that they were convinced their creditors could have had no reasonable cause of complaint. But they had now received information, too well grounded, it was to be feared, that those resources were to be entirely shut up, by an act of the British Parliament, cutting off all their trade with all other parts of the whole universe, except the islands of Great Britain, Ireland and the West Indies.

Money, they said, was not a plant of the native growth of this country: And if the people were wholly restrained by the hand of power from sending such produce of their estates as they might choose, and it was most to their interest to make, to foreign markets, in which alone it would command a tolerable price, they would be precluded from the necessary and proper means of discharging their debts. In such a situation, they presumed, it might be submitted to the governor's judgement, how far it would be consistent with prudence and justice, or even humanity, for them to interpose a legislative authority in order to compel the magistrates to open the courts of civil jurisdiction, and thereby expose the people to cruel exactions; they rather thought it might be better to await the time when the returning wisdom and justice of Great Britain should put it in their power to restore all things to that channel in which they formerly flowed, to her aggrandizement, and the prosperity and happiness of the whole empire.

They said that they would proceed to consider the state of the country, the address of the Lords and Commons, and the king's answer, together with the resolution of the House of Commons, which he had laid before them; this

---

\* There is some obscurity in this passage—I have, therefore, quoted the text literally as it stands upon the manuscript journals, in the office of the keeper of the rolls.



## CHAP.

## I.

The Assembly request information with respect to the expence on the Indian expedition.

they would endeavor to do with that calmness and impartiality which their great importance required; they sincerely wished that they might find, as he had conceived it to be, the proposition then made to them, a benevolent tender and auspicious advance, on the part of the parent state, towards bringing to a fortunate and most desirable issue, all those disputes and dissensions which had so unhappily prevailed.

The Assembly had not been idle while the committee were preparing this address. On the 3d of June, they passed the following resolution. "Resolved that an address be presented to his excellency the governor requesting that his lordship will be pleased to communicate to this House, the best information he has had respecting the number of the militia lately drawn out into actual service in defence of this colony, by his excellency's command, and the probable expence attending the same; and that his lordship will inform this House, what militia his excellency has ordered on duty since the conclusion of the late Indian expedition, and for what purposes." On the 5th, the governor sent a message to the House in answer to their resolution. He stated that he could only inform them from memory, as he had not been furnished with complete returns; that the body of the militia commanded by colonel Andrew Lewis, and that by himself in person, amounted, together, to about 3000 men, officers included; but for particulars, and the expence, he referred them to the county lieutenants, from whence they were drafted, the commanding officers of the different corps, and the captains under them; that the militia on duty, since the Indian expedition, consisted of 100 men, at a temporary fort, near the mouth of the great Kenhaway, as well for taking care of the men wounded in the action between colonel Lewis's division and the Indians, as for securing that part of the back country from straggling parties of Indians, who might not be apprized of the peace, or other of the tribes which had not joined in it. It was likewise necessary, he said, to keep up a small body of men at fort Dunmore, for the security of the country, on that side, and to guard twelve Indian prisoners belonging to the Mingo tribe, which had not surrendered or acceded to the treaty, concluded only with the Shawnese; 75 men were employed at this place, and for these purposes. Twenty five men were likewise left at Fincastle fort, as a post communication between the other two, and all together, for the purpose of forming a chain on the back settlers, to observe the Indians until he should have good reason to believe that nothing more was to be apprehended from them as soon as favorable accounts had been received. The forts had been evacuated and the men

discharged. He laid his letters and orders before the House, together with the substance of the Indian peace which had not then been formally ratified; the ratification having been reserved for a meeting intended to have been held at fort Dunmore, in the spring of the year, where all the Ohio Indians, for the greater solemnity, were to be present; but that he had not been able to find time to proceed there. He concluded—"if there be any thing further which the House shall require to be informed of, I shall be ready to give them all the satisfaction in my power."

As yet the governor affected a conciliatory temper towards the House; for as yet he had not received their address. But his conduct was afterwards destitute not only of that suavity which marks the subtle politician, but also of that politeness which makes a part of the character of a gentleman.

In the midst of important political discussions the Assembly had not lost sight of the most minute interests of their country. They sought information from the governor as to the amount of the tonnage of one shilling and three pence sterling imposed on ships and vessels trading to the colony since the year 1762; and they gave leave to bring in a bill to raise £4000, for the purpose of opening the navigation of the Potomac.

At this time a circumstance occurred, which, though apparently trivial, had no small effect in increasing the irritation of the public mind. On Saturday night the 2d of June, a few young men entered the magazine for the purpose of furnishing themselves with arms. A cord, communicating with two spring guns, had been so placed that the arms could not be approached without touching it. Immediately, as this happened, one of the guns went off, and wounded three persons, though none mortally. One was very much lacerated by several small balls, which entered his arm and shoulder; another lost two fingers of his right hand; and the third was but slightly injured. Circumstances of open violence, or as in this case, of secret revenge, where the whole community feel insulted in the person of an individual, have not unfrequently produced important consequences. Upon this occasion the exacerbation of spirit before excited was considerably heightened by the misfortune of these young men, which was universally attributed to the private malice of the governor.

Having appointed a committee to inspect the public magazine in Williamsburg, and to enquire into the stores belonging to it, and make a report upon it, with power to send for papers, persons and records—the House received,

June, 5.  
Assembly  
appoint a  
committee  
to inspect

## CHAP.

## I.

the maga-  
zine.  
Dunmore's  
conduct  
thereupon.

on Tuesday the 6th of June, a written message from the governor. He stated that he had received a paper, without a signature, requesting him to direct the keeper of the magazine to give access to some persons who were unknown to him. He sent the paper and requested to be informed whether the unknown persons were authorised in requesting access to the magazine.

The paper referred to expressed that the persons addressing it to him, were a committee of the House of Burgesses, who requested to be admitted into the magazine, in order to make a report of its situation. Previous to the resolution, appointing this committee of enquiry, as has been seen, some persons had taken arms out of the magazine, and this circumstance, Dunmore probably thought a sufficient cover for his meanness and duplicity in affecting ignorance of the intention of the House. So far was it from any countenance having been given to violent proceedings, that some members prevailed upon such persons as could be found, with the arms they had taken, to return them to the magazine.

Assembly  
resent  
Dunmore's  
rudeness.

The House of Burgesses immediately took Dunmore's message into consideration, and investigated the affair with becoming diligence, and answered his message with dignity and spirit.

They said that as a proper foundation for enquiring into the causes of the late disturbances, they had appointed a committee to enquire into the state of the public magazine; that upon receiving the governor's message, they had examined into the proceedings of the committee which they found to be as follows:—That the committee, having convened, waited on the Governor from a sense of decorum and propriety, with a request that he would direct the keeper of the magazine to give them access to it; that finding some disorders had been committed, and some arms taken away, they thought it prudent to mention these circumstances to the governor, and also the endeavors which they had made use of to have them restored; that to avoid mistakes they had reduced their entire communication to writing; that in a body they waited upon him in a respectful manner, and by their chairman, made a verbal request, leaving the written paper with the governor, for his better information; that he received the paper, and promised to furnish them with the key of the magazine as soon as he could procure it, that the committee, not hearing from the governor, had directed their chairman to wait on him, who was referred for answer to his message to the House,

They said that they hoped the governor upon reviewing these circumstances would change his opinion, and think



With them, that there was no impropriety in the conduct of the committee ; the House considered their application to him as proper and decent ; the members composing the committee were all known to the governor, and if he perceived any impropriety in their conduct, it would have been friendly in him to have pointed it out to them at the time ; when this committee waited on the governor, another committee had also waited on him, to inform him that the House had agreed to an address in answer to his speech ; that they presumed the one committee was as well known to him as the other, nevertheless he had not recognized the existence of the committee appointed to examine into the state of the magazine ; that though there was not an express order of the House that the committee should apply to him for the purpose they did, yet they conceived that such application naturally grew out of the general order, and was necessarily incident to its due execution.

They observed that they felt very sensibly the insinuations thrown out in the governor's message, but willing to avoid all causes of controversy, particularly at that critical period, they had directed that he should be waited upon, with the order before referred to, and that should any doubts still remain on his mind, they would endeavor to remove them, on their being pointed out to them.

The House of Burgesses then received a message from the council. It stated that a report being in circulation that the marines and soldiers, belonging to the British ship Fowey, were expected at the palace on that day by the governor's orders, and that the people of the city of Williamsburg, and the adjoining counties, were greatly alarmed, and determined to attack them. they had appointed a committee of two of their members, to wait upon the governor, and ascertain the truth ; that their committee had accordingly waited upon the governor, and solicited him to give orders for the marines and soldiers not to march, representing the calamity which would inevitably ensue, if they did ; that the governor seemed astonished at the report and declared that he had given no orders for the marines or sailors to march, that he was ignorant of the intention of any one to send them to the palace, and in case of such a design would send to prevent it.

The Council make a communication to the House of Burgesses.

The House of Burgesses thanked the Council for this communication.

They then requested Captain James Innes, of the volunteer company for the city of Williamsburg, to place and maintain a guard on the magazine, until it should be discontinued by the House of Burgesses. Mr. Braxton was sent to acquaint captain Innes with this order of the house.

They received also a message from the governor, on the

## CHAP.

## I.

The House  
receive a  
message  
from the  
Governor  
on the sub-  
ject of the  
gunpowder

subject of the gunpowder, and the disturbances growing out of that and other events. He said he found that that transaction had given great uneasiness ; but averred that he was influenced by the best motives. He had flattered himself that the best instructions would have been put upon his conduct, as he had once ventured his life in the service of the country, and would do so again, if occasion should require it. He said that the magazine had been represented to him as a very insecure depositary, and from experience he had found it so, as there were now, no arms in it, although those arms had not been purchased by the colony, but sent here by the king, the mark of whose office of ordnance they bore. But trusting that the House of Burgesses had now met to remove all grievances, and restore the public tranquillity, he promised that so soon as he saw the magazine in a state of security, he would replace the powder, and do every thing in his power for the benefit of the colony.

Resolution  
to address  
the Govern-  
or.

June 6th.

June 7th  
Committee  
appointed.

Resolution  
never acted  
upon.

On receiving this message, which wore something like the aspect of concession, the House came to a resolution of the following nature. That an address should be presented to the governor, to express their thanks for his services, in behalf of the colony, and for restoring the public tranquillity on a sure and firm foundation ; that they had the highest sense of his services, during the late Indian expedition ; & that they had directed an enquiry to be made into the causes of the late great uneasiness given to the people, which they should proceed upon with the attention recommended by him, and apply the best remedies their abilities could suggest. On the next day a committee was appointed to draw up an address in pursuance of this resolution : but it seems never to have been acted on. And yet in the notes which lie before me, there is mention made of the governor's answer, to the address of the House of Burgesses, in reply to his message relative to the gunpowder. The following is evidently intended not as an answer to any address relative to the gunpowder, but as an answer to their communication, relative to his message, respecting the committee appointed to enquire into the state of the magazine. In this, he assured them, that his message, to which it alluded was for information only, which he thought was proper on his part, and as he never infringed on any rule of the House nor omitted any ceremony due to it, he had a right to expect to be treated with corresponding politeness. As a proof of his desire to avoid a controversy, he told them that he should direct the key of the magazine to be given to the committee on Monday the 12th. The Treasurer now reported to the House, that the governor had been waited on according to orders, to know when he would be at-

tended by the house, and that he had appointed the next day, at one o'clock, in the afternoon, in the council chamber.

CHAP.  
I.

He also reported that in reply to their application to the governor, for information respecting the tonnage of one shilling and three pence sterling on ships and vessels since 1762, he had directed him to acquaint the House, that he would send an answer by a messenger.

About this time the council thought proper to address the governor separately from the House of Burgesses. The precise date of this address cannot be ascertained, as the Journals of the Council were among the papers destroyed by the British in one of their Vandalic inroads into Virginia. It must however have been previous to the flight of Dunmore. It was published in Purdie's supplement to his paper of June the 10th, and was in answer to his speech to both Houses on opening the General Assembly.

The Council address the governor.

They expressed to him their thanks for convening the legislature, and giving them an opportunity of taking the alarming situation of the colony into consideration, and providing remedies for the increasing evils thereof; that his calling them together, as soon as he thought himself possessed of the means of restoring harmony, could not but be regarded as a proof of his attachment to the dominion.

They declared their willingness to concur with the other branch of the legislature in such a proportion of the public burden, as they might be willing to contribute.

Their conclusion echoed back that part of the governor's speech, in which he had recommended the opening of the courts of justice.

To this loyal address, the governor returned a gracious answer. He said "their willingness to concur in measures which, if adopted, would entirely compose the destructive differences between this country and Great Britain, and restore the order and tranquility of the colony, could not but give his majesty the most sensible pleasure; as the opportunity of communicating to him such a proof of the duty and loyalty of this branch of the legislature of Virginia, afforded him the greatest satisfaction."

About two o'clock, on Thursday morning, June the 8th, the governor with his lady and family, Captain Edward Foy, and some of the domestics attached to the governor, left the palace and retired on board the Fowey man of war, lying at York Town.

The Governor retires on board a British Man of War.

The reasons which he assigned for this clandestine and precipitate retreat will be seen in the next chapter.\*

\* Virginia had the honor of being the first colony from which a royal Governor thought it necessary to retire on board a British armed vessel.



# HISTORY OF

---

*The Governor leaves a message behind him for the house of Burgesses—Joint address of the Council and House of Burgesses to the Governor—Governor's answer—House of Burgesses address the Governor—Committee appointed to enquire into the state of the magazine, make their report—The Governor returns a laconic answer to the lengthy address of the 12th—Reply and detail at considerable length, of the House of Burgesses to the Governor's message of the 10th—Communication from the Governor in answer to the address of the House of Burgesses of the 17th—Joint address of the House of Burgesses and the Council—Governor's Answer—Message from the Governor—Reply of the House of Burgesses—Governor's answer—Report of the committee upon the Governor's answer—Resolutions thereupon—House of Burgesses adjourn.*

## CHAPTER II.

---

The Governor leaves a message behind him for the House of Burgesses.

THE House of Burgesses received information of the governor's flight, the same day on which the event took place, by a message from the Council, accompanied by another, which the governor had written, and directed to be sent down to the house. In this message he told them that he was fully convinced that neither he himself nor any were secure at the palace; that his defenceless situation being well known, some act might be perpetrated which would render the breach with the mother country irreparable; and, that for his own security, as well as for the service of the country, he had removed to a place of safety. He termed the just indignation of the people, "blind and unmeasurable fury," to which he apprehended he was in constant danger of being sacrificed. He feared that some might work themselves up to such a pitch of "daringness and atrociousness" as to fall upon him, and plunge the country into the most "horrid calamities."

He declared that so far from its being his intention to give any interruption to the sittings of the legislature, he hoped they would proceed in the important business, for which they had been convened, with diligence and effect.—He said that access to him would be so easy, as to produce no possible inconvenience in the necessary intercourse between the House and himself; and that it would be much better to send a deputation of members, from time to time,

CHAP.  
II.

to wait on him, as occasion might require, than for the general assembly itself to move, in order to be near him.

He hoped the House would view his conduct as it was really intended ; and he assured them he was as ready to attend to the duties of his office as before, and as much disposed to contribute all in his power, if an opportunity was afforded him " to restore that harmony, the interruption of which was likely to cost so dear to the repose, as well as the comforts of every individual."

This message drew forth a joint address from the Council, and House of Burgesses, in which they expressed their concern that he should entertain any fears for the personal safety of himself or family, as they could not believe that any of their fellow subjects meditated a crime so horrid and atrocious, as he seemed to apprehend. They said that they were fearful the step he had taken would produce a continuance of the uneasiness which had so unhappily prevailed. They regretted that he had not communicated the grounds of his apprehensions to them, as they certainly should have endeavored to remove every cause of uneasiness. They offered to concur in any measure that might be proposed for the safety of himself and family.

Joint address of the council and house of Burgesses to the governor.

They concluded by observing, that it was impossible, with any sort of propriety, or regard to the dispatch, necessary at the advanced season of the year, to carry on business while he was so far removed from them, and so inconveniently situated. They, therefore, earnestly entreated him, to return, with his family, to the palace which they were persuaded would give the greatest satisfaction, and be the most likely means of quieting the minds of the people.

The governor was waited upon with this address, by a deputation, consisting of two members of the Council, and four members of the House of Burgesses. On the 9th the House received the report of their deputation, that they had waited on the governor, on board the Fowey, who had said, that as their address was of the utmost importance to the colony, as well as to himself and family, he would return an answer in writing, after he had maturely deliberated on its contents.

The next day the governor's answer was received, which was in substance as follows :

He said that if no hostile designs were meditated against him, there was at least such an inveteracy, notoriously manifested, as to justify his apprehensions : That he could not have promised himself any security, if he had communicated the grounds of his apprehensions to the House of Burgesses, considering the returns they had made to him for all the civility and respect, which he had been forward to shew them. That they had countenanced the violent and

Governor's answer.

**CHAP.** II. disorderly proceedings of the people ; inasmuch as the magazine had been forced and rifled, in the presence of some of the members of the House of Burgesses, and no other effort made to regain the arms, than to persuade the people to return them, instead of bringing the offenders to condign punishment : That a body of men had openly assembled in Williamsburg, to oppose the march of a detachment of the king's troops, which it had been falsely stated were coming to his assistance ; and that this assemblage had taken place, not only with the knowledge, but even with the approbation of every one ; that the House had ordered guards for the protection of the magazine, only when there remained nothing there worth protecting ; and, if the case had been otherwise, it was an assumption of executive authority, which tended to the subversion of all civil liberty ; he therefore concluded that he should have acquired no additional security by communicating the grounds of his apprehensions to the House of Burgesses.

As to that part of the communication of the House, in which they offered to concur with him, in any measure he might propose, for the security of himself and family, the governor appears to have thought that nothing could effect that object but their undoing all they had done, and abstaining, in future, from every effort, for the protection and security of their rights and privileges.

He said that object could only be attained by reinstating him, in the full powers of his office, as the king's representative, by opening the courts of justice and restoring the energy of the laws, an equal security for all parties ; by disbanding the independent companies and all other bodies of men raised in defiance of lawful authority ; and, by their example, and all other means in their power, abolishing the spirit and practice of persecution against the king's adherents. For the accomplishment of these objects, he was willing to meet them at York, and remain with them until they had finished the business.

He said that his return to Williamsburg would be as fruitless in quieting the minds of the people, as it would be dangerous to himself, unless there was among them a sincere disposition to accede to the terms offered by Parliament, in which event their liberties would be established upon permanent and known foundations ; and that if they manifested such dispositions, he should consider it the most fortunate event of his life to become their mediator with supreme authority, and that it would please him, under such circumstances, to bring back his family as a pledge of his attachment to the country.

On Monday the 12th of June, the chairman of the committee which had been appointed to draw up an address to



the governor, made his report to the House, who agreed to the address and deputed certain of their members to present it. It breathed the genuine spirit of freemen, and is every way worthy of preservation \*

It stated that they had taken into their consideration, the joint address of the two houses of Parliament, the king's answer, and the resolutions of the house of Commons which the governor had laid before them. They said that they still cherished the belief that the great body of the people of England did not approve of the measures of the British ministry in relation to the colonies; and that actuated by a feeling of brotherly love toward their fellow subjects of Great Britain, they had received with pleasure the governor's notification, that advances had been made, by the House of commons of a tendency to produce an amicable and happy conclusion, of the differences which subsisted between the mother country and her colonies. With these dispositions they entered into a consideration of the subject. They had examined it minutely: they had viewed it in every point of light in which they were able to place it; and with pain and disappointment, they ultimately declared that it only changed the form of oppression, without lightening its burden—They could not, they respectfully averred, close with the terms of the resolution of the House of Commons, and that for the reason subjoined:

They said that the British Parliament had no right to interfere with the administration of civil government in the colonies; for themselves, & not for that parliament, had government been instituted in America. They had made provision for such officers, as according to their own ideas, were necessary for the administration of public affairs, and they denied the right of any other legislature to dictate or prescribe either the number or emoluments of their own officers. They said that the claim of the British Parliament, to interfere with the local revenues provided for the support of government in the colony, had been but recently advanced, and for the proof of this they referred to a law passed so long ago as the thirty second of Charles the second, for supporting the government of the colony of Virginia, by which it appeared that no other authority was recognized as competent to give validity to colonial revenue, except the King and the General Assembly.

They said that if they acceded to the proffered terms they should be saddled with a perpetual tax, adequate to the expectations, and subject to the disposal of parliament; whereas they asserted that they had a right to give

CHAP.  
II.

House of  
Burgesses  
address the  
Governor.

\* This was drawn by Thomas Jefferson;—all the preceding by R. C. Nicholas.

CHAP.  
II.

away their own money as the parliament did theirs, free from coercion, and from time to time, as the public exigencies might require. They conceived that they alone were the judges of the condition, circumstances, and situation of the people of the colony, as the parliament were of those of the people of Great Britain, and they contended not merely for the *mode* of raising money, but also for the freedom of disposing of it, without which, they said, they possessed no check upon the royal prerogative.

They said that even if they were to undertake to grant the money according to the terms proposed, the Commons had resolved upon nothing more than to forbear from levying pecuniary taxes on them ; still leaving unrepealed the several acts for restraining their trade, and altering the forms of government of the Eastern colonies ; extending the boundaries, and changing the government and religion of Quebec ; enlarging the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty ; depriving them of the right of trial by Jury—and transporting them into other countries, to be tried for criminal offences. Standing armies, too, they said, were still to be kept up among them, and there remained besides, still unredressed, many numerous grievances, of which they themselves, and their sister colonies, separately, and by their Representatives in the general Congress had so often complained.

They said that at the very time the British Parliament, were requiring grants of money from them, they were also preparing large armaments both by sea and land for the purpose of invading them—a mode of asking for money which they deemed altogether incompatible with their freedom. The ministry, they said, were also proceeding to a repetition of injuries by passing acts for restraining the commerce and fisheries of the New-England Provinces and for prohibiting the trade of the other colonies to all parts of the world, except the Islands of Great Britain, Ireland, and the West-Indies : all this, they said, manifested no disposition, on the part of Parliament, to discontinue the exercise of those powers which they were attempting to usurp over them.

They said that upon their agreeing to contribute their proportion towards the common defence, Parliament had not even then proposed to open to them a free trade : and yet to their apprehensions, it appeared perfectly just and clear, that those who equally bore the burdens of government, should equally participate in its blessings. They said that Parliament should be contented either with the monopoly of their trade, or their proportional contributions—but not to expect, by holding both, to extort from them double taxes. They took occasion to remind the government too, that in cases of former emergency, when they had been called upon as a free people, their contributions

had been liberal, notwithstanding the sources from which they were derived, had been cramped by that very monopoly of their trade:—their conduct, they said in future, should be as generous as on former occasions, and that they should even disdain the shackles of a proportional contribution, whenever they should be called to their free station in the general system of the empire.

They said that the proposition then made to them involved the interests of all the colonies. They were then represented in a general congress, composed of deputies from all the states, whose union, they trusted, had been so strongly cemented, that no partial application could produce the slightest departure from the common cause.—They considered themselves as bound in honor, as well as interest, to share one general fate with their sister colonies: and should hold themselves as base deserters of the union to which they had acceded, were they to agree to any measures of a separate accommodation.

They said that there had indeed been a plan of accommodation offered in Parliament, which, though not entirely equal to what they thought themselves entitled to ask, yet did not differ materially from that to which the general congress had declared their willingness to accede.

Lord Chatham's bill on one part, and the terms of congress on the other, formed a basis for negotiation which a spirit of accommodation, on both sides, might have ripened into a perfect reconciliation. But to the consummation of this desirable event, every obstacle seemed to have been opposed.

These they said were their sentiments on this important subject, which they only offered as an individual portion of the whole empire; leaving the final settlement of the contest to the wisdom of the general congress, to whom they should forward all the documents which had any relation to the subject. Individually as it respected themselves, they said, that they had exhausted every mode of application which their inventions could suggest. They said, "we have decently remonstrated with Parliament, they have added new injuries to the old, we have wearied our king with supplications, he has not deigned to answer us, we have appealed to the native honor and justice of the British nation their efforts in our favor have hitherto been ineffectual. *What then remains to be done—*" *That we commit our injuries to the even handed justice of that being who doth no wrong."*

This admirable production concluded with pious ejaculations, and respectful wishes for the return of perfect harmony with the mother country. This latter was a matter of mere form, as we have just seen them solemnly appeal, and deliberately consign their cause to the God of battles.



## CHAP.

## II.

Committee appointed to enquire into the state of the magazine; make their report.

On the 13th, the committee appointed to enquire into the state of the magazine, made their report, which was received by the house and ordered to lie on the table for the perusal of the members. This report fully confirmed the meanness and treachery which the governor had practised in order to remove or destroy the military stores deposited in the magazine for the defence of the colony; it also corroborated, what had before been affirmed, that he had been guilty of falsehood, in asserting that the powder had been lodged in the magazine, from on board the Rippon man of war, from whence he claimed his right to remove it.

On the 14th the committee appointed to enquire into the causes of the late disturbances made their report, at great length; but it only went to prove upon evidence, what has been sufficiently obvious, that the disturbances in the colony arose from the removal of the gunpowder from the magazine, and the threats of the governor, to incite the slaves to insurrection and massacre.

On the 15th, the House of Burgesses held several conferences with the council, the result of which was that they agreed to join in an address to the governor on the subject of the security of the public arms.

The Governor returns a laconic answer to the lengthy address of the 12th.

On the 16th the governor returned an answer to the lengthy address of the house of Burgesses of the 12th the substance of which has been given. It was sufficiently laconic. He said "Gentlemen of the House of Burgesses—It is with real concern I can discover nothing in your address that I think manifests the smallest inclination to, or will be productive of, a reconciliation with the mother country."

On the 17th the answer of the House of Burgesses to the governor's message of the 6th was reported and agreed to. It was merely complimentary.

An address was likewise this day agreed to, in which they informed the governor that the magazine was repaired, & in a fit condition for the reception of arms and ammunition. They observed that the legislature had long since made ample provision for the purchase of military stores, by granting one shilling and three pence sterling, upon the tonnage of all vessels trading to the colony, which had, for several years past produced more than three thousand pounds. They therefore requested that the governor would order two thousand stand of arms, five tons of powder, and twenty tons of lead, with a sufficient quantity of other military stores to be immediately provided and lodged in the public magazine for the defence of the colony.

On Monday the 19th an address was presented to the governor, in answer to his written message of the 10th—The substance of this answer it will be necessary to give notwithstanding its extreme length; and this for reasons already assigned.

CHAP.  
II.

They said, that they had received his written message of the 10th instant, in answer to the joint address of the Council and House of Burgesses, with equal concern and amazement, and that they were totally unprepared for so severe and cruel a return to the respectful application made to him, which was solely dictated by their duty to their sovereign, and the most earnest desire of contributing every thing in their power, not only to the governor's own happiness, but that of every part of his family. From their joint address, they said they had promised themselves a very different result, from that which had actually taken place.

Reply in detail at considerable length, of the House of Burgesses, to the governor's message of the 10th.

The governor had said in his answer, as we have just seen, that he declined *out of tenderness* to enumerate the menaces and threats of the people: to this the House of Burgesses replied, that they were ignorant *who were the peculiar objects of his tenderness*, that he *so kindly, in favor of them, declined a particular enumeration*: They expressed, at the same time, their regret, that he should have had so little feeling, for the honor and integrity of the House of Burgesses of Virginia.

They said, that the governor had now driven them to the disagreeable necessity of enquiring, minutely, into the causes of the late disturbances in the colony; that it was not with the most distant inclination to give him the slightest offence, that they engaged in so irksome a task, but purely to do justice to their much injured country that they recurred to different and distant transactions.

The insinuations contained in the governor's message, and some other public documents, of disloyalty and disaffection among their countrymen towards the king and his government, they repelled and disavowed as equally grievous and unmerited. Words, they said, they knew, were too often but empty sounds: they therefore, would not appeal to professions, however sincere, but to facts of public notoriety. They averred that the loyalty of Virginia, the most ancient colony, stood confessed, as recorded by many of the governor's predecessors. They said that they would presume to carry his attention no farther back than to the administration of his immediate predecessor. Previous to *his* coming over to Virginia, there had arisen some unhappy disputes between Great Britain and the colonies. The king had sent over to them, *from his immediate presence*.\* "the truly noble lord BOTETOURT," who informed them that he had received instructions, to do justice, and maintain the rights of all his subjects. They said that *HE* had cheerfully entered upon the duties of his exalted station, in which he

\* This is probably a taunt at Dunmore, who was removed from the government of New York to that of Virginia.

## HISTORY OF

CHAP.

II.

=====

had acted as a true representative of his royal master ; at once supporting the dignity of the crown, dispensing the strictest justice, and diffusing benevolence throughout the country. By his exemplary conduct, in all respects, he had accomplished what he deemed a glorious work :—He had given them tranquility and happiness.\*—Indeed he was often heard to declare, that the business of a governor of Virginia, was much easier than he could have conceived, as he found that the government almost executed itself. But matters were not at that time carried on, and precipitated with so high an hand, on the other side of the water, as at present. *This probably was owing to his minutely examining every subject to the bottom himself, taking nothing upon trust ; to his discountenancing tale-bearers, and malicious informers ; and, at last, making a faithful representation of things, such as he found them.* †

.. In a short, too short time, for the happiness of Virginia, it had pleased God to remove him from among them !<sup>2</sup>

They observed to the governor, that when they received the account of his appointment, they indulged themselves in pleasing anticipations, and that when he actually arrived they had vied with each other in endeavouring to make his administration easy and agreeable. They then gallantly adverted to the pleasure they felt upon the report that his lady and family were coming to reside among them, and the expressions of heartfelt joy with which they had greeted her upon her arrival—considering themselves and countrymen as particularly favoured, in having such respectable pledges amongst them, of the sincerity of their governor's good intentions towards the colony. They then observed that changes seldom happened without some sufficient cause, and, that if the governor had, or thought he had, discovered any alteration

\* The feelings of respect for the one Governor, and of resentment towards the other, seem here to have been mingled in the bosoms of the draftsmen of this answer ; and as they became warmed by the subject, in giving an eloquent description of what the one *was*, they, all along, seemed to have intended to exhibit what the other *was not*.

† The sentence marked in Italics is founded on an error of the house of Burgesses. Although Dunmore was a marked tool of power, and a willing instrument of despotism, yet the measures of the British ministry did not proceed, (except in a very small degree) from the misrepresentations of their governors in America, but from a settled design, formed by the Earl of Bute, the preceptor of George III. and but too successfully instilled into the mind of his young pupil, to revive the tory system of government, destroy the constitution of England, and enslave, not only the Colonies, but the British Empire itself. It seems to have been the design of the House of Burgesses to cast additional odium on the character and conduct of Dunmore, by attributing to his communications to his superiors, effects, which they but very partially produced.



in their sentiments or behaviour, it might be worth his while, as well as their own to search for the causes of it.

Respect, they said, was not to be obtained by force from a free people: if genuine it must be perfectly voluntary; and nothing they averred, was so likely to insure it, to one in his high station, as dignity of character, and a candid and exemplary conduct.

They declined, upon the present occasion, a discussion of the subject unhappily in dispute between Great Britain and the Colonies; and they presumed not to interfere with the governor's authority in summoning or dissolving assemblies, when, by the advice of his Council, he should think there was proper occasion: what they claimed, as an act of justice, was, that their conduct should be fairly and impartially represented to their sovereign.

They disclaimed the idea of insinuating that the governor would designedly misrepresent facts; yet it was much to be feared that he had too easily given credit to some designing persons, who, to the great injury of the community, possessed much too large a share of his confidence.

They then proceeded to vindicate themselves from the aspersions cast upon them in Dunmore's letter to the Earl of Dartmouth, dated the 29th of May 1774.

They declared that the design of the then Assembly was entirely misconceived; and they illustrated the danger as well as injustice of attempting to penetrate the thoughts of others, when they are not certainly known, by the ill impressions which it was probable his letter had made on the minds of the king and his ministers.

Suspicious, they humbly conceived, could never justify direct and positive accusations. We know that men, said they, differ in religious sentiments.

Some may believe in the superintendence of a providence, and that the care, especially of nations, is an object of divine goodness; whilst others may think, or affect to treat this, as well as other matters, which the christian religion teaches, as things merely chimerical.†

They now referred to certain extracts of another letter from the governor, to the same minister, dated the 24th of December, 1774. In proportion as the unfavourable representations contained in this letter, were likely to be injurious to the colony, so had they hoped the governor would have been careful in examining the evidence of the facts he stated.

---

\* This attaches to capt. Foy, his secretary, who was the Governor de facto—an Englishman of violent passions, and hostile prejudices against us.

† The House of Burgesses seem to have taken every opportunity to fasten something offensive and unpopular upon the Governor, who was considered a *free-thinker*. For what other purpose these lines upon the subject of religion, which have no connection with any thing that precedes them, or that comes after them, were introduced, is no easy matter to conjecture.

## CHAP.

## II.

In his first letter he had represented the House of Burgesses as fond of having it thought that a determined resolution to deny and oppose the authority of Parliament always originated with them. They appealed to the governor to determine whether this was intended to draw down the particular resentment of Parliament, on the colony of Virginia.

They said that they had, indeed, protested against the power of Parliament, when they thought it extended contrary to the principles of the constitution; but they were not so ready to confess that they ever affected to take the lead of the other colonies, in this or any other measure; that the times of entering their protestations, were merely accidental, as circumstances happened; and (it was notorious,) that the subject of the present complaint had been under the consideration of some other colonies, before the Virginians took it up.

They said that if the governor's letter of the 24th of December were relied on, the association adopted by the general congress would appear to have been first recommended by Virginia; whereas the truth was that Virginia was only first in having resolved against the importation & use of *East India* commodities.\* The general non-export and non-import agreement came first recommended from several of the northern colonies. This circumstance, however, they acknowledged, made no difference then, as the several colonies had united in the association. It had only been remarked, (since the governor seemed to have thought it of importance,) as no strong testimony of his kind disposition towards this colony.

They next took up the subject of the county committees, of whom Dunmore had spoken, in one of his letters to the ministry, in no very favorable terms. They acknowledged that committees had been chosen, in several counties;† the object of whose appointment was to observe the conduct of those who were inimical to the interest of the country; and that the people might know their friends from their foes, they were required‡ to publish the names of all transgres-

---

\* The House of Burgesses of Virginia labour hard, but in vain, to despoil themselves of the glory of being foremost in the revolutionary struggles.

† There is much narrowness of expression here:—In what counties had committees not been chosen? It was principally, if not altogether, through the agency of these committees that delegates were appointed to the colonial conventions, and upon examining the list of returns, as published at the day, there does not appear to be any county unrepresented.

‡ This expression obviously implies a correspondence between the county committees and some superior, or highly respected authority. May we not assert, without any culpable latitude of interpretation, that it also implies a project, not partially adopted by a few counties, but systematically organized by the general consent of the colony?

sors. This they observed, the governor was pleased to term "inviting the vengeance of a lawless mob to be exercised upon the unhappy victims."\* He had, too, farther represented these committees as assuming an authority to inspect the books, invoices, and all the secrets of the trade and correspondence of merchants. This they observed, "was high colouring of assumed facts;" which they, who inhabited different parts of the country, were strangers to.†

To close his narrative upon this head, said they, he had been pleased to inform his correspondent, that "every county in the colony was arming a company of men, whom they called an independent company, for the avowed purpose of protecting their committees, and to be employed against government, if occasion required; and that the committee of one county had proceeded so far, as to swear the men of their independent company to execute all orders which should be given them from their committee."—These were things, they said, entirely without their knowledge; and they declared themselves convinced, upon the strictest enquiry, that they deserved no credit.†

\* Nothing can be more unjust and unmerited than this imputation of Dunmore's. In the manuscript copy of the proceedings of the committee of safety for the county of Northumberland, which I have before quoted, I observe that upon occasion of some violence which had been threatened to the persons and property of certain disaffected individuals, the committee of safety unanimously declared their disapprobation of such conduct, which they officially denounced as "diabolical and savage."

† Notwithstanding the phraseology of the text above, it is certain that the merchants' books were subject to examination. In the manuscript, mentioned in the preceding note, I observe that a select committee was appointed, "to wait on the merchants of the county, and request the perusal of their several waste-books, relative to the price of goods by them sold for one month last past, and also to examine into the prices now marked on their goods, &c. &c."

Notwithstanding the mild form of a request in which the above appears, there is no doubt but what it would have been enforced, had the slightest opposition been made to its execution; the date of the meeting at which this transaction occurred, was Tuesday the 15th day of November, 1774.

‡ It may seem arrogant at this distance of time, and with the faint gleam of light only, which is sometimes shed upon the minutiae of our military arrangements, *preparatory* to the revolutionary war, to contradict an assertion, solemnly advanced, in so serious and important a state paper as the above, yet the author cannot suppress the expression of his conviction, founded upon proofs altogether satisfactory to his own mind, that there was at the time Dunmore wrote the letters before mentioned, a company of men arming in almost every county, if not in every county in the colony.—The probable falsehood of his assertion that *any* county had tendered such an oath as he describes, to their independent company, or to any body of armed men raised within their county—it is indifferent by what name they were called—has been taken notice of in the preceding pages.



## CHAP.

## II.

They then proceeded to state, what, according to their apprehension and information, was the real situation of the colony, as to any extra military arrangements, which might have been made independent of the old and well known militia system. They said that there were a few companies of "gentlemen" formed, who were desirous of perfecting themselves in military exercises; but that thro'out the whole colony, which consisted of sixty one counties, they could not find that even this shew of a military disposition had been exhibited in more than six or seven.

The object proposed by this arrangement was to distinguish them from the militia at large; the first and most considerable of these, was instituted for the better protection of the borough of Norfolk, and afterwards was so far approved of by the governor, that he expressed his warmest wishes that the example might be followed throughout the country, and issued commissions to their officers.— That *these companies*\* were connected with the committees or that they were ever designed to act against, or in any sort to interfere with, what he was pleased to call government, they neither knew nor believed; but, on the contrary, they were verily persuaded that they were always ready and willing to exert themselves to support the laws, & the regal government, to the utmost of their power.

The governor had said, in one of his letters, that the "power of government was entirely disregarded, if not wholly overturned, and that there was not a justice of the peace in Virginia who acted except as a committee man." This assertion, they said, they could not but consider as highly unjust, and extremely injurious to them. They had every reason to believe, and indeed had full proof, that the magistrates throughout the colony duly attended their respective courts; and though, for the reasons assigned in a former address, they did not think themselves authorised to hear and determine civil suits, yet they were persuaded that their (the magistrates') former endeavors to preserve the peace and good order of government had not been interrupted, but exerted in the usual manner. The original cause of suspending the trials of civil suits was, as the governor had observed, the want of

---

\* These companies of gentlemen, who were distinguished from the militia at large, here, for the first time, make their appearance.—In no history of the American Revolution, in no file of newspapers printed in Virginia, during this period, nor in any journal nor manuscript, to which the author has had access, has he been able to discover the remotest trace of any bodies of armed men of the description mentioned above. The House of Burgesses of Virginia seem to have fallen upon every possible plan of disguising the preparations of the colony, as well as the design with which those preparations were making.

a fee-bill. This legal defect, they said, was much lamented, nor was it used, according to their knowledge. as a popular argument, by any man of sound understanding: The inhabitants of this country did not join in what he was pleased to term an opprobrious measure, to engage their "English creditors to join the clamors of the country." As to his assertion, that "not a few did it to avoid paying their debts, in which many of the principal people of the colony were much involved," they could only answer for *themselves* in the negative, but at the same time must consider so indiscriminate a charge as extremely injurious, and every way unjust. They said that they were so far from desiring to do injustice to creditors, that it gave them great pain to observe that such a step was thought necessary; and nothing but the hopes of being relieved from the arbitrary system of colony government, attempted to be introduced, could have prevailed with them to submit to a stoppage of their exports. The merchants of London, they said, in their written message, by a respectable member of their body, to the committee of the House of Commons, had done them ample justice in this respect: they had represented that they should have no uneasiness about remittances from America, unless Parliament pursued such means as were likely to prevent them.

They next took occasion to express their sentiments with respect to the continental Congress: They considered that body as instituted upon principles of public necessity, and did not hesitate to acknowledge that they entertained a proper respect for them. They had learned they said, from good authority, that their petition to the king was graciously received; though it was with concern, they had understood that it had hitherto produced no good effect. It had been said of the inhabitants of Virginia, by the governor, that they treated with "marks of reverence the laws of the Congress which they never bestowed on their legal government, or the laws proceeding from it." This, they observed, was one, out of a great number of facts, requiring proof—since they must take upon themselves to say with confidence, that the inhabitants of Virginia had been second to no others, in any part of the king's wide extended dominions, in all due respect to his government, governors, and all in authority under him. They reminded the governor that a general congress had been held in America, during the last war with the royal approbation: But then indeed, the interest of Great Britain, as well as that of the colonies, might have demanded it.

In imitation of so laudable an example, which had been set them, when the interests of the whole empire were at stake, America, whose liberty and happiness were now particularly jeopardized, had singly resolved on a like measure, as equally, if not more necessary at that critical juncture.

CHAP.  
II.

---

They now adverted to the opinion which the governor had expressed, in one of his communications to Lord Dartmouth, as to the effects which he supposed the association was likely to produce—with which, they said, considering it merely as a matter of *opinion*, they were little concerned to interfere: time only could discover the consequences of that measure. They denied the governor's assertion “that the people of fortune had supplied themselves and negroes for two or three years, to the distresses of the middling and poorer sort;” which assertion they attributed to his giving too easy credit to ill-founded reports.

Some, they said, but very few, might have supplied themselves as opportunity offered, for the then present year; and this they believed was the most that had been done. They were persuaded too of a material mistake in another respect, it being the general opinion, founded on good grounds, that the middling and poorer sort would fare much better than those who possessed fortunes, who had large numbers of slaves to provide for. While upon this subject, they could not refrain from observing how strangely their views had been misrepresented. By the association they intended nothing that was illegal; they were only resolved to be content with their own home spun manufactures, however mean in quality, unless things could be restored to their former channel, which was the only security they desired for what they knew their excellent constitution entitled them to. What he had been pleased to represent as the arbitrary proceedings of the committees would produce, they trusted none of those very dreadful effects which he had painted in such alarming colors.—The whole colony, with very few exceptions, was united; and with such a union of sentiment, the expectations of those, who supposed that discord would arise, must be exceedingly sanguine indeed.

They next proceeded to state the necessity, and vindicate the propriety, of the meetings and regulations of the general convention. They knew not, they said, how the proceedings of that body, in March last, had been represented, but from the specimens, which in justice to themselves and their countrymen, they had found it necessary to record upon the preceding pages, they presumed in no very favorable light. These meetings of the general convention, said they, (unless it could be supposed that a whole country had entirely lost sight of its security and most essential interests,) were rendered absolutely necessary, first by the dissolution, and afterwards by repeated prorogations, of the general Assembly. Upon enquiry into the state of the colony, it was found, that there had been almost a total inattention to the proper training and disciplining of the militia. Various subsequent acts of the legislature, said they, amendatory of the law of 1738,



had expired ; the act providing against invasions and insurrections was near expiring, and it was uncertain whether an opportunity would be given to the general Assembly to revive it. Taking a more extended view of their situation, it had been found that the inhabitants of the country were exposed to the incursions of a barbarous and savage enemy. *From the best accounts which had been received from Great Britain, there was too much reason to be convinced that the ministry were prosecuting the most rigorous and arbitrary measures towards subjugating the whole continent of America to their despotic rule ; which measures they said, it was more than probable, had been suggested from hence, and the other colonies ; and, that a scheme, the most diabolical, had been meditated, and generally recommended, by a person of great influence, to offer freedom to the slaves, and turn them against their masters.* To guard against these dangers, which had not been distinctly discerned until lately, the Convention had recommended a strict attention to the militia law of 1738 ; this law however being defective in many essential points, and particularly, inasmuch as the whole militia were not obliged to muster so frequently as might be necessary, *it had been recommended that volunteer companies should be formed in each county, for the better defence and protection of the whole country.* These proceedings, they said, according to an usual style, it was more than probable, had been represented as designed to oppose government ; whereas, they were persuaded, that nothing was farther from the intentions of the Convention. They appealed to their resolutions, which they said must convince every unprejudiced mind that the utmost respect had been paid to the king and his *legal government*, and that the Convention had much pleasure in expressing their obligations to the governor for his late services. “ The truth is,” said they, warmed by their subject into a more dignified and elevated expression of their feelings, and seeming as it were, personally to address the governor, “ that his majesty’s “ subjects in this colony have the utmost attachment to “ their sovereign ; they admire, they love the constitution “ and will risk every thing most dear and valuable in support of it. These are principles imbibed in their infancy, “ and their constant care is to inculcate them upon the “ minds of their children ; they meditate or design nothing “ in the least offensive.\* *But if it is expected that they should “ sit down supinely, and submit to yokes which neither they “ nor their forefathers were able to bear, they must acknowledge that they have the sensibility and feelings of “ freemen, actuating them to a proper and justifiable de-*

---

\* An implied, if not an obvious, assertion, that they would defend themselves.

CHAP. *"fence of those rights which are guaranteed by the laws and*  
 II. *"principles of the constitution."*

They next adverted to the investigation which they had caused to be made into the late commotions :—And they declared, from the examination of many respectable gentlemen, as well as merchants and natives of Great Britain, as of others residing in different parts of the colony, that the country was in a perfect state of tranquility until the account was received of the governors having removed the gunpowder from the public magazine, to one of the king's ships of war, and of his irritating and unjustifiable threats.

The inhabitants of this country they continued, could not be strangers to the many attempts in the Northern colonies to disarm the people, and thereby deprive them of the only means of defending their lives and property — That the like measures had been generally recommended by the ministry, and that the export of powder from Great Britain had been prohibited, they well knew from good authority. A removal, then, of the small stock which remained in the public magazine, for the defence of the country, and the stripping the guns of their locks, must have been very alarming to any people, who had the smallest regard for their security. The manner and time of doing it, made no small addition to the general apprehension of the governor's designs. The very reason which he had assigned for taking this step, they should have supposed, at any other time, the most likely to have directed a very different conduct. They should have thought that a well grounded apprehension of an insurrection of the slaves ought to have called forth the utmost exertions to suppress it.

The world, they observed, would probably judge his method of doing this, the least likely to effect the desired end.

They said that upon making enquiry they could not find that the powder in the magazine had been brought from on board the Rippon or any other man of war ; and they supposed that he had been misinformed since the removal of the powder, as that circumstance had not been relied on in his answer to the address of the corporation of Williamsburg : however this might be, they did not conceive the case to be materially altered.

They reminded him that by an ancient law of the country, enacted so long ago as in the thirty second year of the reign of Charles II. an impost of one half pound of new gunpowder, and three pounds of leaden shot, or one shilling and three pence sterling, was imposed on all ships or vessels coming into the colony. In the ninth year of the reign of queen Anne, the impost of one shilling and three pence, on the tonnage of vessels, had been continued, for post duties. It was evident that this impost had been in-

tended to provide a proper stock of ammunition for the defence of the country.

They said that they had examined the produce of this fund, for the last thirteen years, and found that it had yielded in that time twenty eight thousand, five hundred and three pounds, three shillings and nine pence sterling, which on an average amounted to two thousand, one hundred and ninety two pounds eleven shillings sterling, per annum; and it was observable that for the four last years it had yielded considerably more than three thousand pounds in each year. They therefore said that it was incumbent on the executive part of government to have provided, from such ample fund, every species of military stores, necessary for the defence of the country. But if this fund had been appropriated to other purposes, and even if the powder and arms, in the magazine, had been procured from some other source they yet thought that they should have been suffered to remain there, until the exigencies of the country called for them.

They then adverted to the commotions which had taken place in Williamsburg, and in the country generally, upon the removal of the powder from the magazine, and the taking off the locks from the muskets; the irritation of the public mind, they observed, had been greatly increased, by an account, from the northward, of the engagement at Concord, which had originated in an armed force having been sent to seize a provincial magazine; this they said held out to the people an addition I proof that the steps which he (Dunmore) had taken, made a part of the general system to render the colonies defenceless and to enslave them.

They expressed regret at the course which the governor in his message seemed determined to pursue, as it was most likely that it would revive the uneasinesses of the people, and prevent the restoration of harmony.

The governor, in one of his messages, had said, that if he had communicated to the house of Burgesses, the grounds of that alarm which induced him to fly from the metropolis, he had no right to calculate upon its producing any good effect: —In answer to this they said that he ought not to judge of their disposition as to public affairs, from their declining the civility which he said he had been forward to offer them. They did not conceive, indeed, how the governor could think of admitting to his table, a set of men, whom, together with the whole body of their constituents, he had endeavoured to paint in such despicable and odious colours.

With respect to any commotions among the people, or the rifling of the magazine, they solemnly denied having given any countenance to the one, or had any participation in the other. Again they entered upon a detail of what



CHAP. 11. really did occur upon these occasions, by which it appeared, that as private gentlemen they had discountenanced them ; and, had they interfered in any other way, they agreed that the governor would then have had good reason to charge them with encroaching upon his authority, and the authority of the executive government ; which he had done upon no better grounds than their requesting some gentlemen of the town to guard the magazine ; and in this, indeed upon enquiry, there had been found little worth guarding, as most of the powder had been removed or buried, and all the valuable muskets despoiled of their locks.

With respect to an assemblage of armed men in Williamsburg, for the avowed purpose of attacking a party of the king's forces, and this " with the approbation of every body," they said, that they had assembled to defend the city, and its inhabitants, against an attack which it had been reported was to have been made upon it ; but that they had peaceably retired to their several homes, upon the receipt of correct information, that no such attack was meditated. The city, they said, had again become composed until the retirement of the governor, *in the dead of night*, as if he supposed any person would have attempted to obstruct his passage, or interfere with his inclinations.

The occasion and design of forming independent companies at first, and the rise of volunteer companies afterwards, they said had already been explained ; and if their abolition was expected, that expectation could not be fulfilled ; as self-preservation, the first law of nature, warned them not to throw the country again into a defenceless situation.

They said that those who had taken any of the king's arms, were still open to the law ; but that they themselves could not interfere but by a new act, which would be *ex post facto*, in the most odious sense of the words. This they conceived would be the greatest infringement of one of the fundamental principles of their constitution. Such a practice they said might have obtained under another meridian ; but it was not of American growth.

They repelled the charge of disloyalty, and said that they had the sincerest and most active desire to seize every opportunity of establishing the freedom of their country upon a fixed and " known foundation," and of uniting themselves with their fellow subjects of Great Britain, in one common bond of interest and affection. But we have no " doubts" say they, " of what such freedom consists in ; it is written, as with a sun-beam, on our hearts." They said they were equally sensible of those essentials which alone could admit them to a participation of a just proportion of the common interest ; but for the variety of cogent reasons, assigned in their address in answer to his speech,

they could not view the proposal of the House of Commons, in the same light that he did.

CHAP.  
II.

They informed the governor that the important business of the assembly had been not a little interrupted by his removal from the proper seat of government ; but at the same time rejected his offer, that they should adjourn to York-Town, and meet him there, for the dispatch of business. They reiterated their request that the governor would return to the palace ; but said if he still persisted in his resolution to remain absent from the seat of government, they should rest satisfied ; conscious that while they had been solicitous, to do justice to their constituents and themselves, they had not been wanting in the respect which was due to the representative of their sovereign.

This address concluded by advising the governor not to be influenced by designing men, but to consult with his proper constitutional council upon all important subjects.

Communication from the Governor in answer to the address of the House of Burgesses of the 17th.

On the 20th the House of Burgesses received a message from the council accompanied by a paper containing the governor's communication relative to the arms. He said that experience had shewn the insecurity of the public magazine, and that as the palace had hitherto been respected, he thought it improper to give any other orders, than that the arms belonging to the king, which had for so many years been lodged in the palace, might still remain there, and that they should on no account be touched without his express permission.

The House also received a report that to the joint address of the council and House of Burgesses of the 17th, the governor had sent an answer to the council ; and that to their separate addresses of the same date he had transmitted two written communications.

The papers now delivered to the House, stated, with cold and reluctant formality, that the acknowledgement, on the part of the House of Burgesses, of the high sense which they entertained, of the services rendered by the governor during the late Indian expedition, would, it was hoped, *though late*, still do credit to the *justice* of the House.\*

He said that the care and disposal of the public stores of ammunition belonged exclusively to the kings' representative : that experience had shewn Williamsburg to be

\* In a printed fragment which contains some of the correspondence between Dunmore and the Assembly, I find this note, on his address : " The confusion the business had been thrown into by his Lordship's removal on board the man of war retarded this address, as well as other matters of great importance."

CHAP.  
II.

an improper place for the residence of the governor : and, that therefore, as he could not attend to its preservation, *there*, he must refuse to return the powder to the magazine : He again asserted too that the powder belonged to one of the king's ships.

He said that the money arising from the duty on tonnage, had been appropriated as, according to his construction, the law imposing that duty authorised ; and the charge of inattention to the safety of the country, in the cases either of invasion or insurrection, he endeavored to repel, with some apparent sensibility.

To the request of the House of Burgesses that he would order a certain quantity of arms, powder and other military stores to be provided, he answered that when they had complied with his requisitions, restored him to the executive power of government, and satisfied him that the arms, powder and military stores, would be employed no otherwise than he should direct, he should then be happy, with the means they might furnish him, to provide every thing.

Joint address of the House of Burgesses.

On the 21st the House of Burgesses took into consideration the preceding communications from the governor and after a conference with the council, agreed to a joint address, which was drafted and presented by a deputation from the council, and the House of Burgesses.

They acknowledged the receipt of his answer to their former joint address. They said that although the arms might be said to belong to the king, as the supreme head of the government, yet they were originally provided, and had been preserved for the use of the country in case of emergency.

They disclaimed all intention to interfere with the executive authority of which they hoped their former addresses had afforded the strongest testimony ; but the exposed situation of the arms in the palace, subject to be abused to the most destructive purposes, was to them a subject of extreme alarm. Decency, they said, had prevented them from placing a guard over the palace, as they had done over the magazine, and they once more earnestly entreated the governor to order the arms to be removed to a place of security.

They represented how much the business of the Assembly had been retarded by the absence of the governor, and stated that there were several bills of the last importance to the country then ready to be presented for his assent.

They said that they had hitherto submitted to the great inconvenience of sending their members, twelve miles, to wait on the governor, on board one of the king's ships to present their several addresses ; but in presenting the bills which they had passed at the capitol, for his assent or rejection, they never could consent to meet him any where.



Else than at the capitol ; they therefore beseeched him to return ; and as the season required their presence at their respective homes, they hoped he would give them a speedy and ultimate reply.

On the 22nd the governor returned a short and strunty answer to the preceding address. He said that he had already declared his intentions with respect to the arms in the palace ; that the Assembly were interfering in an affair which did not concern them ; and that he should like to know to whom they alluded, when they made use of the terms " rude invaders," in describing the exposed situation of the public arms.

Governor's answer.

He said that the disorders among the people, had driven him to the necessity of changing his place of residence, and if the Assembly had experienced any inconvenience from it, he was not chargeable with it. He said that they had had every necessary and free access to him ; and contended that it was his undoubted right to call the Assembly to any place in the colony, which the exigency of the occasion might require.

He said that he had not been made acquainted with the whole proceedings of the Assembly, and therefore he knew of no bills of importance, which, (even if he were inclined to risk his person among the people again,) the Assembly had to present to him, nor whether they were such as he could assent to.

On the 23rd the Attorney General reported to the House that he had shewn the engrossed bills and resolves to the governor, who had returned by him a written message.

A message from the Governor.

The governor refused his assent to the bill for appointing commissioners to settle the accounts of the militia, lately drawn out into actual service, and for making provision to pay them, because it imposed a duty upon slaves imported ; an attempt at which he said had been made before by the Virginia Assembly, and rejected by the king in the tenth year of his reign. He had other objections to the bill, which, when those objections were removed, he should be happy to concur in, as tending to reward the brave people who were the particular objects of it. If those objections were not removed, all he could do would be to transmit the bill to the king, and desire leave to assent to it ; though as it respected the duty imposed upon imported slaves, he frankly confessed he did not expect to obtain it.

He said he saw no objection to any other of their bills, and therefore was ready to give his assent to them, whenever the House might desire it.

He requested that if they had any other bills ready, they might be sent to him in the same manner, as he wished to pass them altogether ; and he also asked for a copy of the journals of the House, before the time was fixed for passing the bills.

of m- up- the Go- lars' swer,

## CHAP.

## II.

Reply of  
the House  
of Burgess-  
es.

The House addressed the governor in reply to this message. They said they could not express their concern at his finding any difficulty in assenting to this bill, which had met with the approbation of the other two branches of the legislature. They said that the services of those brave people had been sensibly felt and warmly recommended to their particular attention, by the governor himself, and that they had seized this, the first opportunity which had offered, of making them all the compensation in their power, for their honorable toils and dangers in war; that upon considering the subject they found that this could only be effected by a speedy emission of paper money—the scarcity of cash in the country being so great.

They said that they could not perceive any thing in the bill which contravened any law or royal instruction; and his other objections to the bill they seemed to remove with equal facility.

In order to support the credit of their paper currency, it was necessary to establish a fund adequate to its redemption; among others they had supposed a duty of ten per cent on imported slaves would be the least burdensome to the people; they had never known that such a duty had been objected to by the king, but had always understood that a duty not exceeding ten per cent would be agreeable to him. The five pounds per poll, on slaves imported from the West Indies, was intended to prevent the many frauds which had been practised to avoid the payment of any duty on such slaves, and amounted to no more than ten per cent valueing them at the moderate average of fifty pounds current money of Virginia.

They said they were pleased to find that he approved of the other bills and resolves; and still hoped that upon reconsidering the subject, he would alter his opinion respecting the militia bill which they had much at heart.

They had before, in conjunction with the council, intimated to the governor the necessity of a recess at this season of the year, when their harvests demanded their attention at home; they now entreated him to meet them at the capitol, for the purpose of giving his assent to such bills and resolves as he approved of. They hoped he did not still entertain any groundless fears that his person could be in danger; but if he was still under that strange influence, they would pledge their honours and every thing held sacred among men for his complete security. If however he still declined complying with their wishes, they requested that he would grant his commission to the President of the council to give his assent to such bills and resolves as were presented to him and approved of by the governor.

As it had been customary for the governors to signify their pleasure as to adjournments, they requested that he

would, at the same time, express his approbation that they should adjourn to some day in October when they could be better spared from home, and the sickly season would probably be over. They did not, they said, desire to take things out of their old channel.

They concluded by observing that they did not wish to conceal any thing contained in their journals from him, although his request was an unusual one, but that a complete transcript of them at that time was impracticable; however, they ordered all such of their proceedings as had been printed to be immediately forwarded to him.

On the 24th the governor returned a written answer to the above address of the House of Burgesses.

CHAP.  
II.

The Go-  
vernors  
answer.

He said that as they incumbered the bill, for the payment of the troops, employed in the late Indian expedition, with an imposition, to which, they knew, he could not assent, and omitted a form with which, they had been told he could not dispense, no blame should attach to him, because it did not now pass into a law. He contented himself with referring to the reasons, which he had yesterday assigned them, upon these points.

He said that the well grounded causes which had induced him so believe his person not safe in Williamsburg, had daily increased and that therefore he could not meet them at the capitol, but that on Monday he should be ready to receive them, at 12 o'clock, at his then residence, for the purpose of giving his assent to such acts as he should approve of.

Although the convenience of the House, he said, would always be a strong motive to determine him, as to the time of their meeting or adjournment, yet he thought it necessary, from an expression in their address, that they did not wish to take things out of their old channel, as if they possessed the power to do so, to assert the right of the crown, to adjourn, prorogue, dissolve, or assemble them as the governor of the colony thought fit; he did not, however, mean to oppose their present request of being adjourned.

Upon the receipt of this message the House immediately resolved themselves into a committee of the whole, for the purpose of taking into consideration the state of the colony, and the governor's answer to their address of the 23d.

The committee reported that they had taken into their most serious consideration, the unhappy state of the colony and considering the many obstructions given to the due and regular prosecution of the important business depending before the General Assembly, by the governor, in first removing from the palace on board one of the king's ships, whereby a free access to him, and that necessary intercourse between him and the other two branches of the legislature,

Report of  
the com-  
mittee up-  
on the Go-  
vernors'  
answer.



CHAP. had been in a great measure cut off : considering that he  
 II. had withstood the repeated intreaties of the Council and  
 house of Burgesses, to return to the seat of his govern-  
 ment, and having on that day received such an answer from  
 him, as, when compared with his different messages, and  
 other parts of his conduct, convinced them of his determi-  
 nation, not to do any thing that should be advantageous to  
 the colony, and particularly to the inhabitants on the fron-  
 tiers, by requiring the House to attend him on board the  
 Fowey man of war, in order to present such bills as are now  
 ready for his assent ; thought it a duty highly incumbent on  
 them, for themselves and the whole body of their constitu-  
 ents, to make several resolves, in maintenance of their just  
 rights and privileges, and in hopes of removing those preju-  
 dices, which had already been, and might again be attempt-  
 ed, to be excited in the breasts of their sovereign, and of  
 their fellow subjects in Great Britain :—They then presen-  
 ted their resolutions, which were agreed to, without a dis-  
 senting voice, and were as follows.

Resoluti-  
 ons there-  
 upon.

“ *Resolved, nemine contradicente*, That his Lordship’s message, requiring this House to attend him on board one of his Majesty’s Ships of War, is a high breach of the Rights and Priviledges of this House.

“ *Resolved, nemine contradicente*, That the unreasonable delays thrown into the proceedings of this House by the governor, and his evasive answers to the sincere and decent addresses of the representatives of the people, give us great reason to fear that a dangerous attack may be meditated against the unhappy people of this colony ; it is therefore our opinion that they prepare for the preservation of their property, and their inestimable rights and liberties, with the greatest care and attention.

“ *Resolved, nemine contradicente*, That we do and will bear faith and true allegiance to our most gracious sovereign George the Third, our only lawful and rightful king—that we will at all times, to the utmost of our power, and at the risque of our lives and properties, maintain and defend his government, in this colony, as founded on the established laws and principles of the constitution.

“ *Resolved, nemine contradicente*, That it is our most earnest desire to preserve and strengthen those bands of amity with all our fellow-subjects in Great Britain, which are so very essential to the prosperity and happiness of both countries.

“ *Resolved, nemine contradicente*, That it is with the deepest concern we find ourselves deprived of an opportunity of making immediate provision for these gallant officers and soldiers, who so nobly defended this country against the incursions of the Indians, unless we would sacrifice their own, and the inestimable Rights and Priviledges of all other inhabitants of this colony ; that as we have already

endeavored to make the most ample provision for this necessary purpose, so will we gladly seize every opportunity afforded us for doing the utmost justice to those brave men and all other public creditors."

The House then adopted a resolution appointing commissioners to ratify the treaty concluded with the Ohio Indians, and appropriated two thousand pounds to defray the expences of the mission. This resolution was, at the same time, agreed to, by the council.

They likewise adopted another resolution, appointing other commissioners, to adjust the claims of the militia, lately drawn out into actual service; and then the House adjourned to the 12th of October: on that day, 37 members only appearing, which was not a sufficient number to proceed to business, they adjourned to the first Thursday in the succeeding March '76. On the 7th March only 32 members appeared; who adjourned to the first Monday in May. On Monday, the 6th of May, several members met, "but did neither proceed to business nor adjourn, as a House of Burgesses."\*

The house  
of Burgesses  
adjourn

Thus terminated the last and most important session of the Virginia Assembly which was held under the regal government.

The constant gratitude of the American people, will through every succeeding generation, be always due to this assembly of enlightened patriots. Virginia had been ever foremost in asserting the rights of the colonies, and resisting the oppressions of the mother country: on this account, therefore, more than from the strength of her population, or the extent of her territory, she ranked as the first member among the United Colonies; and had her Assembly, upon this occasion, have accepted of any partial terms of accommodation, favorable to themselves alone, and in exclusion of the rights of the other colonies, or had they been less firm in repelling the aggressions of the governor, or less able in defending their own liberties, the cause of American Independence might probably have terminated very differently from what it actually did.

\* Extract from the Journals.

# HISTORY OF

---

*Previous to their separation, the members agree to meet in Convention.—Many volunteer companies arrive at Williamsburg—Said to have been well disciplined—Convention meet at Richmond—Their proceedings—Custom-House at Hampton, Robbed—Reprisals made on the public money at Williamsburg—Proceedings of the Convention continued—The Baptists address the Convention—Further proceedings of the Convention—Attack on James Town—New repulse at that place—Affair in Princess Anne.*

## CHAPTER III.

---

After the Assembly had adjourned, the delegates previous to their separation, agreed to meet in convention, on the 17th of July, at Richmond.

Previous to their separation, the members agree to meet in convention.

Whether the preceding correspondence be considered as a lucid exposition of the causes which led to the determined opposition of Virginia, to the tyrannical proceedings of the parent state, or, in a more enlarged point of view, as an able defence of the general principles of political liberty, I cannot imagine that the reader will think his patience has been abused, by the number of pages, which have been devoted to the narration of the transactions that occurred during this short, but memorable session, of the last *Regal Assembly* which ever sat in Virginia.

Preparations for defence in the Lower country.

Towards the last of June the inhabitants of Williamsburg assembled at the Court House, and agreed to request the Convention, when they should meet, to send a reinforcement of about 250 men, to be stationed in that town with the company belonging to it. It was also thought desirable, at the time, that the other towns, in the lower country, should be provided and guarded in the same manner, so as to concentrate their forces with celerity, at any apprehended point of attack. These proceedings took place in consequence of an alarm, which had been excited by a report, that the British were about to send troops to the colony.

Many volunteer companies arrive at Williamsburg.

During the month of July, volunteer companies from a great number of counties continued to arrive at Williamsburg. Those from Hanover, Henrico, Sussex, Chesterfield, Caroline and Cumberland, arrived the earliest; their numbers were about 200, disposed into seven companies. Soon after arrived the volunteers from Spotsylvania, King



George, Albemarle, James City, Surry, Louisa and Stafford; and in the latter part of the month, companies of infantry arrived from Southampton and Charles City. All these are said to have been well equipped, and to have performed their military evolutions with a skill and precision far beyond what might have been expected from raw troops.

Dunmore, who had convoyed his lady as far as the capes, on her return to England, again resumed his former station, off York-Town, in the Fowey man of war.

At this time, also, a vessel which had been loaded at Suffolk, with a large quantity of provisions, was taken by some of the tenders, and conveyed to Boston, for the use of the British army and navy.

Captain M'Cartney, of the ship Mercury, having left New-York, on the 1st, arrived and anchored off York-Town on the 11th. This vessel came to relieve the Fowey, which sailed on the 14th in company with the Otter; the latter bound on a cruise; the former, after landing Dunmore at Portsmouth, was to proceed to Boston, with Captain Foy, of the British Artillery.

A party of troops, which had marched from Williamsburg on the 11th, were now encamped near York-Town; probably with a view to protect the country from marauding parties of British seamen.

About this time, "The two Sisters," Captain Maxwell, arrived in James river, and brought intelligence, that about forty sail of transports were in the British Channel, when she left it, about the 16th of May, destined for Ireland, in order to take in troops for America.

On Monday the 17th of July, the convention met at Richmond, according to appointment. They immediately proceeded to make active preparations to resist the common enemy. They resolved to embody 3000 men, exclusive of officers, and three troops of cavalry, for the service of the lower country. Two companies of 100 men each, were to be stationed at Pittsburg; another company, of 100 men, at Point Pleasant; twenty five men at Fort Fincastle, at the mouth of Wheeling; and 100 men at proper posts in the county of Fincastle: These, as their local destinations bespeak, were for the protection of the South-Western frontiers, from the inroads of the savages; and John Nevil with his company was commanded to take possession of Fort Pitt. It was resolved that a company of minute men should also be raised in each county; to be trained to arms, called out on any emergency; and allowed full pay when on duty.

According to a recommendation of the general congress, about sixty young gentlemen were to be sent from Virginia, to serve as cadets, under General Washington,

CHAP.  
III.

Said to have been well disciplined.

July 17.  
Convention meet at Richmond. Their proceedings.

CHAP.  
III.

Custom  
House at  
Hampton  
robbed—  
reprisals  
made on  
the public  
money in  
Williams-  
burg.

commanding the army before Boston. I do not find it mentioned by whom they were to be sent, or how they were to be selected; the plan, however, was admirably adapted to the purpose of training skilful officers.

Some British sailors having robbed the Custom House, at Hampton, of about £900, a party of volunteers assembled in Williamsburg, and made reprisals upon the following sums of money—£360 from the Receiver's and Auditor's offices; £314 14, from the Post Office; and about £1000 from the Naval Office, of the upper district of James River—making a total amount of £1674 14. When the Williamsburg volunteers informed the convention of this transaction, they expressed their disapprobation of it; and the parties concerned acknowledged that they had acted in a precipitate manner; and that they should not have adopted any measures of hostility without first consulting, and obtaining the approbation of the Convention; but I do not any where find that the money was restored. The convention had prohibited the exportation of grain, and all kinds of provisions after the 5th of August, which was subsequently rescinded, in consequence of the refusal of the State of Maryland to co-operate with Virginia in this measure. In pursuance of the resolution of the convention, the Williamsburg volunteers seized a vessel, outward bound, loaded with bread and flour.

They had not then heard that the prohibition was withdrawn. The vessel was released; but the convention applauded the zeal of the volunteers. The Borough of Norfolk petitioned against this prohibition, as injurious to the merchants and traders; the convention resolved the petition to be "*indecent*."

Proceed-  
ings of the  
convention  
continued.

They resolved that all persons, accepting of any office of profit, under the crown of Great Britain, should be disqualified from being a deputy from Virginia to the Continental Congress; from holding a seat in the State convention; in the General Committee of Safety; or, in any of the County Committees.

They then proceeded to appoint deputies to represent them in the General Congress of the United Colonies.

The following persons were elected, and the ballot, upon the journals, stands thus.—

For Peyton Randolph	-	89,
Richard Henry Lee	-	88,
Thomas Jefferson	-	85,
Benjamin Harrison	-	83,
Thomas Nelson	-	66,
Richard Bland	-	61,
George Wythe	-	58,

It was resolved that any four of these should be a sufficient number to represent the colony.

Richard Bland having resigned, Francis Lightfoot Lee was appointed to supply the vacancy.

The convention now proceeded to make a selection of the officers to command the troops about to be raised. They appointed Patrick Henry to command the first regiment; Thomas Nelson to be colonel of the second regiment; and William Woodford of the third; but Nelson resigning, Woodford was appointed to command the second, William Christian was appointed lieutenant colonel to the first regiment; Charles Scott, to the second; Francis Eppes, major to the first regiment; Alexander Spotswood, to the second; and, Thomas Bullitt, adjutant general.

CHAP.  
III.

It appearing to the convention, that only 15 1-2 barrels of gunpowder had been taken out of the magazine at Williamsburg, by Dunmore; of the £330 exacted by Patrick Henry, from the Receiver-General, they retained only £112 - 10s, deeming that sum a sufficient indemnification, and directed the treasurer to return the balance.

Those christians, denominated Baptists, addressed the convention in a patriotic style. They stated that their religious tenets did not prevent them from fighting in defence of their country; and that their Pastors would promote the enlistment of the youth of that persuasion. The convention returned a complimentary reply, and directed that Sectarians should have the privilege of performing divine service, to their respective adherents in the army, equally with the regular Chaplains of the established church. The Baptists have continued, to this day, among the firmest supporters of liberty.

The Baptists address the Convention

The Convention receiving intelligence that Dunmore meditated an attack upon Williamsburg, recommended it to the committee of that city, and the committees of the adjacent counties, to repel force by force.

The Convention finally proceeded to the appointment of a general committee of safety: They were eleven in number and composed of the following persons—Edmund Pendleton, George Mason, John Page, Richard Bland, Thomas Ludwell Lee, Paul Carrington, Dudley Digges, William Cabell, Carter Braxton, James Mercer, and John Tabb.

This committee were instructed to provide a magazine, in an eligible situation; commissions, to military officers were to be issued in the name of the committee; Richmond was resolved upon, as the next place for the meeting of the convention; and this most respectable and patriotic assembly then closed their session.

The Convention had done away every thing, of which the situation of the colony admitted, to procure arms and ammunition for the troops which it had been resolved to raise.

Proceedings of the convention continued.

They recommended to the Chairmen of the different county committees, to collect all the saltpetre and sulphur,



**CHAP.** which could be procured, and they enjoined individuals to deliver up such portions as might be on hand, reserving only what might be wanted for medicinal purposes; these collections and contributions were to be paid for at the public expence. Money, due by fines, imposed by courts martial, were also recommended to the different committees, to be appropriated to the purchase of arms and ammunition.

**III**

A census of the population of the colony was recommended to be taken; distinguishing ages, sexes, and colors; and a return to be forwarded to the President of the Convention, who would certify the same to the Continental Congress.

Collections of money were recommended to be made, in the different counties, for the purchase of gunpowder, lead, flints and cartridge paper, in order that the whole colony might be placed upon an equal footing, in these respects, and a return to be made to the next Convention.

Certain merchants, and others, natives of Great Britain, but residents of Virginia, presented a petition to the Convention during this session.

They declared their attachment to the colony, and its cause, and their willingness to join in all measures of defence, except actually bearing arms against those who might be their nearest relatives.

They requested that a line of conduct might be prescribed to them, by which they might continue useful members of the community, without being obliged to shed the blood of their countrymen.

This petition was deemed reasonable by the Convention; and they recommended to the several county committees, to protect, and to treat with lenity and friendship, all those persons, who did not shew themselves inimical to the common cause of America.

August.

The inhabitants of Norfolk, and its neighbourhood, were at this time put to great inconvenience in consequence of the elopement of their slaves. This luckless race of men could, indeed, scarcely change their situation for the worse; and being deluded by vain anticipations, they sought to be enlisted on board the British Men of War, in the hope of obtaining their comparative freedom: But they were not received, and assurances were given to the inhabitants, that their resort to the British Navy would be discountenanced. In consequence of this, a deputation from the Common Hall of Norfolk, returned the thanks of the Corporation to Captain Mac Cartney, and Captain Squires, for their conduct towards the fugitive slaves of that town, and the circumjacent counties.

In the early part of this month, Lord Dunmore, who had recently taken up his residence on board the ship William, received a reinforcement of about sixty men, who had

arrived in the sloop Tender, from St. Augustine. These he maintained as a body guard. He also seized three ships at Norfolk; these were private property.

In the beginning of September, the Convention published a formal declaration. They go over the facts which have been already detailed. They say that a causeless and hasty dissolution of the general Assembly, drove the representative body to the unhappy dilemma of either sacrificing the most essential interests of their constituents, or of meeting in general Convention, to assert and preserve them. "What," say they, "could be expected of this country? That we should sit supinely down, and suffer the views and machinations of an arbitrary relentless ministry to be carried into execution, without opposition or control? The justice due to this community, every motive to public virtue, conspire in forbidding it."—The Convention also appointed a committee of safety—invested with ample but not unlimited powers—Their nature and extent will appear in the sequel, from their proceedings.

Septemb.  
ber.

This committee might be considered as a temporary executive, for carrying into effectual operation the ordinances of the Convention for the protection of the colony.

About this time a severe tempest is described as having occasioned the shipwreck of many vessels, and the loss of many lives. Amongst others, the Otter sloop of War, commanded by capt. Squires, was cast away on Back river, near Hampton, and burnt by the neighboring people—Squires escaped.

Intelligence of the diabolical designs of the British ministry, to spirit up the red savage of the wilderness to attack the western frontier of Virginia, was now made public; it was published as a report; but subsequent events confirmed it. Agents were appointed, and furnished with large sums of money to distribute among the Indians.—And as the names of these agents deserve to be "damned to everlasting fame," *Campbell, Abbot and Trent*, stand upon record, as the men. Each furnished with £40,000; the Canadian Indians the destination of the first; those on the Ohio, of the second; and the third, it would seem, was to act according to his discretion.

In consequence of the burning of the Otter sloop of war, and the seizure of a few trifling articles which were on board, Captain Squires addressed a letter to the committee of the town of Hampton, informing them that they should be responsible for the same; this threat reaching Williamsburg, 100 men, under the command of Major Innes, marched from that place for the protection of Hampton—Squires not attempting to execute his threat, this body of troops returned; but it was thought proper to replace them, soon after, by the like number under Major

CHAP. Eppes. The regulars were now also notified, by Patrick  
 III. Henry, to rendezvous within two miles of Williamsburg.

Septem-  
 ber.

The last of this month the committee of safety adjourned from Hanover town to Williamsburg, for the more convenient despatch of business; previously, however, it was recommended to the County committees to direct the commissaries or contractors, in each district, to provide tents, kettles, canteens, drums, fifes, and a stand of colors, with the following motto—on one side

“VIRGINIA, FOR CONSTITUTIONAL LIBERTY.”  
 and on the other side the name of the district.

October.

Regular troops continued to arrive at Williamsburg; three companies reaching that place, in the beginning of this month. The King and Queen company of minute men were marched to Hampton where they were to be stationed for some time.

A vessel loaded with West India articles, the private property of a citizen of Norfolk, was, about this time, seized by the king's officers, and sent to Boston for the use of the garrison there. Added to this, Dunmore committed an outrage in Norfolk which excited the strongest sensibility and warmest indignation in the inhabitants of that borough.

A British officer, with twelve or thirteen soldiers and a few sailors, landed at the county wharf in Norfolk, and under cover of the men of war, who made every show of firing on the town in case the party were molested, marched up the main street to Holt's printing office, from whence without opposition or resistance, they carried off the types with many other printing materials, and two of the workmen.\* The corporation of Norfolk remonstrated with Dunmore on this outrage; stated their ability to have cut off this small party had they been so disposed; and requested the immediate return of the persons and property illegally seized. Dunmore's answer was taunting and insulting in the highest degree. He said that he could not have rendered the people of Norfolk a greater service, than by depriving them of the means of having their minds poisoned, and of exciting in them “*the spirit of rebellion and sedition* ;” that their not having cut off the small party,

---

\* This acquiescence on the part of the people of Norfolk, is thus accounted for in the prints of the day:—“The situation of Norfolk and Portsmouth was different from that of any other place in Virginia. The inhabitants were almost to a man, merchants and mechanics, and a majority of them Scotchmen and Tories; the town full of slaves ready for insurrection at the beck of their leader; two men of war always prepared to fire on them; the inhabitants had little ammunition, and were badly furnished with arms. There were some cannon belonging to a few gentlemen, who had fitted out privateers during the last war but those were not mounted, or furnished with cartridges, and were therefore useless and removed into the country.”



who took Holt's types, he imputed to other reasons, than their peaceable intentions, as the drums were beating to arms, without success, the greater part of the time that the party were on shore. He gave them no satisfaction on the subject of restoring the persons and property seized and carried off. Holt, the printer, was not silent on the occasion. He published, in the Williamsburg papers, an eloquent philippic, against Dunmore, and a patriotic advertisement, stating his intention to establish a new press, to be conducted on the same principles, as that which had been destroyed.

Towards the last of this month six companies arrived in or near Williamsburg, some of them armed with rifles.— Dunmore also received a reinforcement from St. Augustine of about 200 men; of this the committee of safety were informed by express. He then with 140 men, went upon an expedition against Kemp's-landing, now called Kempsville, in Princess Ann County. His object was to intercept a quantity of gunpowder, lately imported—but this had been carried off some time before. A blacksmith's shop was broken open, and about 50 muskets destroyed: 2 officers, in the minute service, and 4 privates were made prisoners. Captain Matthews who commanded 50 minute-men at this place, was himself made prisoner. He declined the combat, it is said from inequality of numbers. The accounts of the day differ with respect to many of these little skirmishes: some stating Dunmore's force to have consisted of 200 men, others at 140 as stated above. It is not material; the fact of Dunmore's success in this petty affair, is acknowledged by every one.

For some months Dunmore carried on a predatory warfare against the colony of which he had recently had the government. He landed a party of soldiers at Norfolk, destroyed 17 and carried off two, without molestation.

He was induced to this by information which he had received, that these cannon were to be fitted up and placed upon the wharves and on other eligible places for the purpose of annoying his fleet: and that a number of men were daily expected from Williamsburg, who were to fire them from behind hogsheds filled with sand. This plan, if in agitation, he rendered abortive.

Soon after, there appeared off the mouth of Hampton river, a large armed schooner, a sloop and three tenders, with soldiers on board: and a message was received at Hampton from captain Squires, on board the schooner, that he would that day land and burn the town. On which a company of regulars and company of minute-men who were placed there in consequence of former threats denounced against that place, made the best disposition to prevent their landing, aided by a body of militia who were suddenly called together on the occasion.

CHAP.  
III.

The British accordingly attempted to land, but were retarded by some boats sunk across the channel for that purpose.

Upon this they fired several small cannon at the provincials without effect; they in return, discharged their small arms with such unerring aim, as to compel the enemy to retire. The evening preceeding this they had landed and burnt down a house in the vicinity of Hampton.

On intelligence of this reaching Williamsburg, about 9 o'clock at night a company of mounted riflemen were dispatched to the aid of Hampton, and an officer appointed to take the command of the whole, who with the company arrived at Hampton about 8 o'clock the next morning, notwithstanding it rained incessantly the whole night.

The vessels sunk at the mouth of the creek had not been placed so advantageously as was intended, in consequence of the rapidity of the tide. Squires, who commanded the expedition in person, was therefore enabled during the night, by cutting away the bowsprits of two of the vessels to pass into the creek, and draw up his fleet close to the town. The fire upon the town commenced soon after the arrival of the troops from Williamsburg; but was returned so briskly from the houses on the shore, that the assailants were compelled to retire precipitately.

October.

The British lost in this attack, a small tender with five white men, a woman, and two slaves; six swivels, seven muskets, some small arms, a sword, pistols, and several papers belonging to lieutenant Wright, who made his escape by leaping overboard, and swimming to the shore, from whence he was taken off at the mouth of the creek, by some of the fleet as they retreated outward. It was the general opinion, at the time, that all the British vessels would have been captured, but for the accidental circumstance of the wind shifting, at the very moment that they found it necessary to retreat; for they entered when it blew from the south, and it shifted to the opposite point most opportunely for them.

When it was discovered that they were about to retire, a party was despatched by land, to oppose their passage through the narrow mouth of the creek; but, whether by accident or design, is not known, when they had marched but a small distance from the town, a report was suddenly spread among them, that a party of the British had landed in a different direction, and were about to attack the back part of the town. This caused a halt, and produced a momentary confusion. Before correct information could be obtained, the vessels had cleared the creek. The report was groundless.\* Not a single Virginian was killed

---

\* This account of the attack upon Hampton, and the repulse of the British, is taken partly from the printed accounts of the day

the glory and the advantage of the day remained entire with the Patriots, whilst the British retired with considerable loss, and more than proportionate shame.

In the mean time, numbers of armed Virginians hourly arrived at Williamsburg, from various parts of the upper country. Fired with patriotic and holy enthusiasm, they courted the toils and dangers of the tented field. They were eager to participate in the expedition, which was to inflict on Dunmore and his adherents, a blow too long delayed, and to relieve the suffering friends of American rights and American liberty, in Norfolk and the adjacent counties. To these menacing movements, the British were neither inattentive nor indifferent. Informed that the second Virginia regiment and the Culpeper battalion had lately been ordered down to Norfolk, Dunmore resolved to prevent, if possible, their passage across James river — With this object in view, he directed the King Fisher and three large tenders to move up to Burwell's ferry. The hostile flotilla reached that place on the 10th of November. About 300 yards from the landing, lay an American vessel—At this vessel the enemy's ships immediately fired, ordering her, in a haughty and peremptory tone, to come along side of the King Fisher. Some Virginian riflemen had been stationed on a high and commanding part of the bank. These brave defenders of their insulted soil, directed the Skipper to remain where he was. The consequence was an immediate and vehement contest. The vessel lay about 300 yards from our men, and rather less than a mile from the man of war. The latter now directed against the object of the struggle, a brisker fire. This, however, was without effect. A barge full of men was then seen to advance from the King Fisher towards the vessel. Our riflemen steadily watched her approach—so soon as it had proceeded within a suitable distance, they fired with such precision as to kill three of the enemy. This kindled additional irritation in the breast of the latter. Hostility became frenzy. \* A smart cannonade ensued, but with inconsiderable effect. A 6 pound ball perforated both sides of the ware-house, in which some men had stationed themselves, and several struck and buried in the bank under them. A second attempt was made by the man of war to seize on the boat, but though more formidable, because better conducted than the first, this attempt proved equally abortive. The rifle guard, seasonably reinforced by the accession of ten men, poured upon the barge so brisk and

Affair at  
Burwell's  
ferry—November 10.

November  
13.

and partly from the statement of persons who were on the spot. The correspondence of a few eminent revolutionary characters has also been consulted, and furnished satisfactory details.

\* Here L. H. GIBBARD's narration commences.



### CHAP. III.

so well directed a fire, that the people on board found it necessary to seek their safety in a precipitate return to the ship. Thus were all the objects of this hostile expedition defeated by the skill and gallantry of a few expert and resolute men. Their success nerved resistance with fresh vigor, and swelled the current of the popular hope.

Attack on  
James Town

Impatient to atone for so unexpected a failure, the men of war and the tenders moved up to James-Town, in the course of the following night. They had just received reinforcements from Norfolk, and their anticipations of success were sanguine and high. At James-Town, however, repulse and shame again awaited them. A boat was filled with armed men, who received orders to effect a landing at a certain part of the beach. At that very spot, captain Green had posted two rifle sentinels, being himself stationed with his men about half a mile higher up. As the boat approached the people in it were repeatedly challenged; no answer was returned. Upon this the sentinels fired at the boat, then about 50 yards distant. Their fire was immediately returned, and the boat still advancing, rapidly pressed upon them. Not a moment was to be lost.— One of the sentinels speedily ran off to captain Green, to apprise him of the impending danger, and bring him to the point of attack. The other steadily maintaining his ground, and the more firm and collected, as the peril drew nearer, loaded again, and, as soon as he deemed the boat within a suitable distance, discharged his rifle a second time. A terrible and melancholy shrieking which immediately followed on board, convinced him that his fire had not been ineffectual. Before Green's arrival, the boat tacked about and made off.

New repulse  
at that place

November  
16.

Affair in  
Princess  
Anne.

On the 16th of this month, intelligence of an afflictive nature reached Williamsburg, and clouded for a moment a bright dawn of success. Hearing that about 200 men of the Princess Anne militia were on their march to join the troops destined for the protection of the lower country, Dunmore, had proceeded from Norfolk, at the head of a superior force, composed of regulars, fugitive slaves and disaffected inhabitants, with a view to intercept that patriotic band. The latter, aware of no hostile design, advanced in incautious security, to the place of their destination. They were unexpectedly attacked, and compelled to engage, under the double disadvantage of an unfavorable ground, and inferior numbers. Supported, however, by inherent courage, and warmed by the justice of a noble cause, they, for some time, fought with great bravery and execution. At last the combined disadvantages, just mentioned, compelled them to retreat, which they did in perfect order. John Ackiss, one of the minute men, was killed on the spot. Col. Hutchings and a Mr. Williams, with

seven others, were wounded and taken prisoners.\* Information of this unfortunate occurrence was communicated to col. Henry, by an express from the camp at Cobham, who, with some danger, crossed James river a little above the place where the man of war and the tenders had taken their station.

CHAP.  
III.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Dunmore's proclamation, dated November the 7th—Effects of this proclamation—Woodford crosses James river at Sandy Point—Oath prescribed by Dunmore—Dunmore threatens Suffolk—A party is detached by Woodford to protect that place—He marches there himself—Columns and inflammatory reports about this expedition—Declaration of the Committee of Safety thereupon—Connelly's plot—Proceedings at Suffolk—Scott advances to the great bridge—Hostilities commenced there—Plan of an immediate attack on the enemy—That plan is relinquished—Two companies of disaffected militia dispersed by Wills—Woodford marches from Suffolk to the great bridge—Operations there—Offer of troops from North Carolina accepted.*

In Norfolk and the adjacent country, Dunmore counted numerous adherents. Their rash advice, together with his own impetuous, revengeful and haughty spirit, early impelled him to a measure characterized by folly, and fraught with incalculable mischief, both to the colony and to his own cause. Under date of November 7th, he issued the following Proclamation, whose style strongly indicates the agitation of a perturbed mind, whilst its substance betrays a blind, impolitic, ruinous inflexibility, and, what is still worse, a savage and wanton disregard for some of the fundamental principles upon which the social fabric essentially rests, and for those rules of civilization which are usually respected even in the phrenzy and calamitous intent of war.

Dunmore's  
proclamation,  
dated  
Nov. 7.

\* See *Virginia Gazette* of this date.—Some of our documents relate this affair rather differently, and charge part of the militia with misconduct. Candor demands this remark.

CHAP. "By his Excellency the Right Honorable JOHN. Earl of  
IV. Dunmore. His Majesty's Lieutenant and Governor-  
General of the Colony of Virginia, and Vice Admiral  
of the same,

A PROCLAMATION."

"As I have ever entertained hopes that an accommoda-  
tion might have taken place between Great Britain and  
this colony, without being compelled, by my duty to this  
most disagreeable, but now absolutely necessary step,  
rendered so by a body of men unlawfully assembled, firing  
on his Majesty's tenders, and the formation of an army,  
and that army now on their march to attack his Majesty's  
troops, and destroy the well disposed subjects of this colo-  
ny. To defeat such treasonable purposes, and that all  
such traitors and their abettors may be brought to jus-  
tice, and that the peace and good order of this colony may  
be again restored, which the ordinary course of the civil  
law is unable to effect; I have thought fit to issue this my  
Proclamation, hereby declaring that until the aforesaid  
good purposes can be obtained, I do, in virtue of the pow-  
er and authority to me given by his Majesty, determine  
to execute martial law, and cause the same to be executed  
throughout this colony; and to the end that peace and  
good order may the sooner be restored, I do require every  
person; capable of bearing arms, to resort to his Majesty's  
standard, or be looked upon as traitors to his Majesty's  
crown and government, and thereby become liable to the  
penalty the law inflicts upon such offenders; such as for-  
feiture of life, confiscation of lands, &c. &c. And I do  
further declare all indented servants, negroes, or others  
(appertaining to rebels) free, that are able and willing to  
bear arms, they joining his Majesty's troops as soon as may  
be, for the more speedily reducing this colony to a proper  
sense of their duty to his Majesty's crown and dignity. I  
do further order and require all his Majesty's liege sub-  
jects, to retain their quit rents, or any other taxes due, or  
that may become due, in their own custody, till such a  
time as peace may again be restored to this at present  
most unhappy country, or demanded of them for their  
former salutary purposes, by officers properly authorised  
to receive the same.

"Given under my hand, on board the ship *William*, off  
Norfolk, the 7th day of November, in the 16th year of his  
Majesty's reign.

"DUNMORE.

"God save the King!"

On the fate of this proclamation, Dunmore had staked  
his ultimate and now his best hopes. The experiment  
was hazardous in the extreme. When so violent, so deci-  
sive a step was taken; when all the avenues that might  
lead to a better understanding, were peremptorily



closed ; when the terrors of martial law were ostentatiously proclaimed, and defiance hurled in the face of principles hitherto held sacred and inviolable, a physical force of superior magnitude should have been at hand, to support the menacing attitude, and execute the lofty mandates of angry authority. Such a force, however, Dunmore did not possess. Consequently, this frantic attempt to awe the Virginians into unconditional submission, ended in results widely different from those which he had anticipated. It was the last, hideous, but substantially ineffectual struggle of convulsed and agonizing tyranny. It is true, that many individuals resorted to the royal standard, but they were such characters as a just and noble cause might well spare ; men already devoted in their hearts to all the pretensions and encroachments of the mother-country ; ignorant and timorous persons, accustomed to look on the monarchs' representative with reverential awe, and whom the empty name of rebels, and the bare image of the dreadful penalties hanging in its rear, were sufficient to terrify into an ignominious compliance ; finally, the worst of that wretched class to whose hopes, passions, and resentments a disgraceful appeal had been made, and whose presence would have polluted even a camp of savage invaders. All these were pitiful advantages in comparison with the accumulated difficulties produced by this rash and intemperate measure. New fuel was added to the flame of public irritation against the late Governor, his malignant ends, and the base and detestable means to which he did not blush to resort. Increasing danger contributed to stimulate patriotism and to harmonize opinion. The impulse to measures of energy now became resistless. The whole tenor of Dunmore's conduct, since the commencement of the unhappy dispute between the parent state and the Colonies, was indignantly contrasted with the insidious assurances of a conciliatory temper, and of favorable hopes, unblushingly stamped on the face of his proclamation. " Has not," says a paper of that day, " his conduct for many months past, had the most direct " and strongest tendency to widen the breach already existing, and render a reconciliation more difficult ? For " what other purpose did the late Governor write his " false and inflammatory letters to the ministers of State ? " Why did he, under cover of the night take from us our " powder, and render useless the arms of our public magazine ? Why did he secretly and treacherously lay " snares for the lives of our unwary Brethren, snares that " had like to have proved but too effectual ? Why did he, " under idle pretences, withdraw himself from the seat " of Government, where alone he could, had he been willing, have done essential service to our country ? Why, " by his authority, have continual depredations been

## CHAP.

## IV.

" since made upon such of our countrymen as were situated within the reach of ships of war and tenders ?  
 " Why have our towns been attacked, and houses destroyed ? Why have the persons of many of our most respectable Brethren been seized upon, torn from all their connections, and confined on board of ships ?  
 " Was all this to bring about a reconciliation ?"  
 The same paper goes on in a well supported, and very impressive strain of eloquent indignation, urging the palpable contradiction between the words and the acts of Dunmore—reminding the people of Virginia of those rights which "nature and nature's god" had bestowed upon them in common with those of Great Britain, and emphatically adverting to the frequent attempts made by the British Parliament at taxation without representation.—  
 " Had we immediately taken up arms," the author exclaims, " to assert our rights and to prevent the exercise of unlawful power, though our cause would have been just, yet our conduct would have been precipitate, and so far blamable. We might then, with some shadow of justice have been charged with rebellion, or a disposition to rebel. But this was not the way we behaved.—We petitioned her and again in the most respectful manner ; We hoped that the righteousness of our cause would appear, that our complaints would be heard and attended to. We wished to avoid the horrors of a civil war, and so long proceeded in this fruitless track, that our not adopting a more vigorous opposition seemed rather to arise from a spirit of meanness and fear, than of peace and loyalty ; and all that we gained was to be more grievously oppressed. At length, we resolved to withhold our commerce from Britain, and by thus effecting her interest, oblige her to redress our grievances. But in this, we also have been disappointed. Our associations have been deemed unlawful combinations, and opposition to Government ; we have been entirely deprived of our trade to foreign countries, and even amongst ourselves ; and fleets and armies have been sent to reduce us to a compliance with the unjust and arbitrary demands of the British minister, and a corrupt parliament. Reduced to such circumstances, to what could we have recourse but to arms ? Every other expedient having been tried, and found ineffectual, this alone was left ; and this we have, at last, unwillingly adopted.—If it be rebellion to take up arms in such a cause as this, rebellion, then, is not only a justifiable, but an honorable thing. But, let us not be deceived by empty sounds. They who call us rebels, cannot make us so. Rebellion is open, and avows opposition to lawful authority : but it is usurped and arbitrary power which we have determined to oppose. .  
 " . . . . .

“ We are dutiful members of society, and the persons  
 “ who endeavor to rob us of our rights, they are rebels,  
 “ rebels to their country and to the rights of human na-  
 “ ture.”

We have here transcribed almost the whole of this nervous and animated piece, because it appears to have been a faithful echo of the public sentiments. The author concludes with some forcible and appropriate remarks on that part of the Proclamation which invited the slaves to arms; exposing, in all its turpitude, the demoralizing and subversive tendency of the measure, and the inherent cruelty of that selfish and treacherous policy, the sole aim of which evidently was to enlist into a service equally fraught with difficulty, labor, and peril, the robust and the young, whilst it abandoned the infirm, the aged, the women, and children, to the resentment of injured and exasperated masters;—and solemnly warning the credulous objects of an hypocritical benevolence against the snares of a faithless and wily tyrant, who, after accomplishing his own ends, if however, such ends could at all be accomplished, would either give up the offending fugitives to the rigor of the laws which they had infringed, or mercilessly, surrender them to the horrors of a worse bondage, under the inclement sky, and the still more inclement institutions of the West Indies; or, at best, leave them unprotected and defenceless to the fate of proscribed vagabonds, in whose utter destruction all civilized societies would feel equally interested.—Such were the effusions of the general feeling on the subject of this desperate effort of expiring despotism: we shall soon have occasion to notice the energetic and dignified declaration made on the same subject by the Representatives of Virginia assembled in general Convention.

In the mean time, the most active measures were pursued to crush the local ascendancy of Dunmore, and to render his ruthless and depredatory career transient as the torrent which it resembled in its effects. Col. Woodford embarked his men at Sandy Point and crossed over to Cobham, in order to join the first detachment of the Virginia forces already stationed there. For the purpose of preventing his passage, a large tender had been ordered up from the hostile flotilla, then moored in view of James Town.—This tender, the brave Woodford was determined to attack; but as soon as his boats were manned and began to advance from the shore, the tender tacked about and resumed its late station. This continued series of disappointment and disgrace equally humbled and exasperated the enemy. In their mortification, the man of war and tenders, for a long time, fired with incredible fury at the men posted near James Town. After thus fruitlessly venting their impotent rage, they all fell down the river, to reinforce the late Governor at Gosport.

Woodford  
crosses  
James river  
at Sandy  
Point.



## CHAP.

## IV.

The appearance of Woodford, with the forces under his command, was anxiously looked for by the patriots in the lower country, especially by those of Suffolk, whose situation daily became more critical. In conformity with the system announced in his proclamation, Dunmore had set up his standard in the counties of Norfolk and Princess Anne, issued orders to the militia captains for raising a body of men to oppose the colonial army; (1) prescribed to all the inhabitants, and violently extorted from some, a declaration, or oath, by which they were made "to acknowledge themselves sensible of the errors and guilt into which the colony had been misled, under color of seeking redress; (2) to abjure the authority of those factious men, who, under the various names of committees, conventions and congresses, had usurped the legislative and executive powers of government, and were in a state of actual rebellion against their lawful sovereign; to promise faith and allegiance to his most sacred majesty, George III; opposition to armed bodies of men collected, without any legal authority, in various parts of the Colony, and the defence, against such troops, of the passes into their respective Counties, to the very last drop of their blood." Bent upon thus recovering, by stratagem and violence, his lost authority, exulting in fortuitous success, and in the swelling multitude of the motley partizans daily resorting to his standard, eager besides, to improve every momentary and local advantage, he had resolved on possessing himself of Suffolk, in order to destroy the provisions collected at that place for the colonial forces, to carry with greater success his Proclamation into effect, and, finally, to make such dispositions as might enable him to intercept the march of the patriot army towards Norfolk. The intelligence of this hostile design had justly alarmed the people of Suffolk, then in a defenceless state. Willis Riddick, a zealous citizen, who commanded the militia, hastily drew up part of them together, but these were badly provided with arms, and ammunition. He, therefore, lost no time in representing to Col. Woodford, and, through him, to the Committee of Safety, the exposed and dangerous situation of the place, soliciting, at the same time such assistance as might deter Dunmore from his meditated attack, or foil him in his sinister schemes, should he actually attempt to carry them into execution. This call for assistance reached Colonel Woodford on the night of the 20th November; early the next morning, he detached a party of 215 light troops, (105 of them excellent riflemen) under the command of lieutenant Col. Scott, Major Marshall, and other proper officers;

Oath prescribed by Dunmore.

Dunmore threatens Suffolk.

A party is detached by Woodford to protect that place.

(1) Appendix, No. 1.

(2) Ibidem, No. 2.

directing them to make a forced march, to watch the movements of the enemy, and, by every possible effort, to prevent the further progress of Dunmore, until the main body of the colonial army could reach the intended field of action. This decision and promptitude of Woodford, and the alacrity manifested by the detachment, excited universal applause. The expediency of waiting for an additional supply of various implements of war, together with the difficulty of procuring waggons for the conveyance of the baggage, somewhat retarded the departure of the gallant commander himself; but he soon followed with the rest of his men, and arrived at Suffolk on the 25th.

The object of this expedition were both just and salutary. They chiefly embraced the "protection and defence of the persons and the property of all friends to America."—On this subject, the instructions delivered to Woodford by the Committee of safety are emphatically positive; and, whilst they direct "that Tories, and others who take an active part against their country, are to be considered as enemies, they solemnly call on the humanity and discretion of the commanding officer, to prevent the wanton damage and destruction of any persons' property whatsoever." (1) The malignity of the disaffected, however, could not be restrained by their consciousness of the mild, humane, and even generous system thus intended to be pursued. Calumnious and inflammatory reports were sedulously spread, ascribing to the patriots, and, under their direction, to the army now on its march, a plan of resentful proscription, and merciless severity. Aware of the mischievous tendency of such impressions, if suffered to take root in the public mind, and intent upon conciliatory, not upon irritating measures, the Committee of safety thought it proper to issue on the subject, the following declaration:—

"Whereas divers reports have been propagated that the army destined to guard and protect the inhabitants of the counties of Norfolk and Princess Anne and the parts adjacent, were empowered and directed to destroy the houses and property of particular persons in some of the towns in those parts, who have been justly alarmed by such false and malicious reports: in order, therefore, to do justice to the public in general, and to satisfy all private persons in particular, the Committee of Safety think it necessary to declare, in the most solemn manner, that the above mentioned reports have been propagated without having the least foundation in truth, it

CHAP.

IV.

He marches  
there him-  
self

Calumnious  
and inflamma-  
tory re-  
ports about  
this expedi-  
tion

Declaration  
of the Com-  
mittee of  
safety there-  
upon

CHAP. "having been determined, and the army aforesaid being  
 IV. "instructed particularly to support and protect the per-  
 sons and property of all friends to America, and not  
 wantonly to damage and destroy the property of any per-  
 son whatsoever.

*By order of the Committee,*

EDMUND PENDLETON, President.

November  
 26  
 Connelly's  
 plot

About this time new evidence was afforded of the extent and diabolical nature of the flagitious schemes secretly framed and matured by the treacherous Dunmore, against that very colony of which he professed himself the guardian, the protector and the friend. The part of those schemes to which a reference is now made, contemplated no less than an active co-operation of the Indians with the disaffected in the back settlements, and, by penetrating through the interior of Virginia, in hostile and formidable armies, an ultimate junction with Dunmore himself at Alexandria, on the Potomack, early in the ensuing spring. The principal actor in this deeply laid intrigue, was one John Connelly, a native of Lancaster county in Pennsylvania. This man, conspicuous for his bold, enterprising, restless, artful disposition, had presented himself to Dunmore towards the latter end of July preceeding, with certain proposals, equally flattering to the resentment and to the hopes of the exasperated Governor. He was, of course, favorably heard, and highly encouraged. A plan was jointly formed, that seemed to promise infallible success. Assurances of ample rewards from Dunmore were conveyed to such officers of the militia, on the frontiers of Augusta county, as were thought well inclined to the royal cause, and willing to evince their devotedness to the sovereign, by placing themselves under the command of Connelly. Already the Indians on the Ohio had been prepared to act in concert with him against the friends of America in that quarter. To consolidate this scheme, and the better to connect its extensive ramifications, the crafty adventurer was, about the 15th of September, dispatched by Dunmore to General Gage at Boston; and towards the middle of October, he returned with instructions from the latter. These instructions contained a full developement of the whole design. Connelly the original projector, was invested with the grade of Lieutenant Colonel and commandant of a regiment to be raised among the Loyalists of the frontier settlements. He was to proceed to Detroit, and there to be reinforced with several companies of the Royal Irish, by Captain Lord, then stationed at Fort Gage, in the Illinois Country. From the different garrisons in those parts, field pieces and military stores were to be furnished him. No artifice calculated to seduce such Indian chiefs into an efficient co-operation, no effort likely to invigorate the sinews of savage warfare,



was to remain untried. Fort Pitt was fixed upon as the general rendezvous of all the forces thus to act under Connelly. Thence they would have crossed the Alleghanies, and, marching through Virginia, joined Dunmore, on the 20th of April ensuing, at Alexandria, where an army was to land, under the cannon of ships of war. Of that town, the conspirators hoped to possess themselves with the utmost facility. For a long time, fortune seemed to favour this apparently well concerted and formidable plot, in the prosecution of which Connelly had often travelled to considerable distances, and in various directions, without meeting with any serious obstacle or danger. At length, the mystery in which his nefarious practices had been hitherto shrouded, was happily removed. Certain suspicions arose in the breast of a Patriot, who knew an Indian Commissary between whom and the Governor expresses frequently passed, to be hostile to the American cause. These suspicions induced the seizure of an express of this description, whose papers led to a partial discovery of the plot and its authors, and enabled a colonial committee to take proper measures for the arrestation of Connelly. As the latter, therefore, was, in company with two other persons, proceeding to Detroit, the destined theatre of his first operations, a party, purposely stationed on his route, stopped him together with his companions, about five miles above Hagerstown. They were brought for examination before the County-Committee at Frederick-town in Maryland, ten days after Connelly's parting with Lord Dunmore. The two individuals who attended him on his journey were Allen Cameron, a native of Scotland, and Dr. John Smith, also a Scotchman. The former had been induced to embark in this hazardous undertaking by the grant of a commission, as 1st Lieutenant under Connelly, and by assurances of rapid promotion; and the latter, if his own declaration be credited, by the appointment of Surgeon to the projected regiment. Upon searching and examining their baggage, a general plan of the whole scheme was found, with large sums of money, a letter from Dunmore to one of the Indian Chiefs, and other authentic documents calculated fully to dispel every doubt, and to fix upon the agents and representatives of monarchy the additional stigma of odious machinations against a Colony that had hitherto professed none but constitutional objects. Dunmore's letter (1) was seasoned conformably to the Indian taste, that is couched in a style highly figurative, and hyperbolically fraternal. It was lovingly addressed to Brother Captain *White-eyes*, with a request that he should convey, to the *Corn-stalk*, as well as to the chiefs of the *Mingoes*, and the rest of the six nations, the sentiments which it contained.

---

(1) Appendix, No. 4.

**CHAP. IV.** Thus was a plot originally contrived with profound and amazing secrecy, and, in its subsequent stages, managed with consummate skill, brought by patriotic vigilance and zeal to an untimely catastrophe. The result only contributed to feed the flame of public discontent, and to injure the cause which the bold and wily projectors had intended to promote.

Proclam-  
ings at Suf-  
folk

It has already been stated that Colonel Woodford, with the main body of the Virginia forces, reached Suffolk on the 25th of this month. His appearance was hailed by the Patriots as the harbinger of victory, and of future security to the Lower Country. Several mounted volunteers here joined him. Here, too, he found under confinement eight suspected persons, among others, one Wallace and his betrothed mistress, with a young Marylander, taken in arms against Virginia. The Committee of safety was immediately consulted on the measures which it would be proper to adopt in relation to those Prisoners. It appears that Wallace's attachment little partook of those romantic and glowing transports which would have induced an impassioned lover to prefer confinement with the object of his affections to liberty without her; for, no serious charge being alledged against him, he, with peculiar warmth, solicited a speedy release. Mr. Page, the member of the Committee of Safety, on whom this part of the public correspondence had devolved, confiding in Woodford's prudence and humanity, left to his decision the management of this delicate matter, recommending, at the same time, polite attention and tender treatment to the lady, and the promotion of her matrimonial hopes. "The young Marylander taken in arms against us," he added, "I should wish to send to Maryland, and consign him over to the resentment of an honest Committee of his own country."—The same letter contained the sketch of a counter-proclamation, of which no use seems to have been made by Woodford.

Scott advanced to the  
great bridge  
November  
28

The detachment under Scott and Marshall, not having met with the enemy in the environs of Suffolk, continued their march with unabated alacrity, and advanced within about eight miles of Great-Bridge, securing in their progress, especially in the vicinity of *Deep Creek*, several obnoxious characters. Intelligence was there obtained that the Great-Bridge, a pass of primary importance, as it opened to the colonial army the only avenue to Norfolk, was guarded merely by Blacks, and an inconsiderable body of disaffected Inhabitants. This information afforded new motives for activity and dispatch. Accordingly, after ordering three small parties towards the waters to secure and collect all the boats to one place, a measure which was promptly and easily effected, Lieutenant Scott resumed his march, and reached the Bridge about 12 o'clock, on the 28th. A scheme to cut off some advanced centinels of the

CHAP.  
IV.

---

Hostilities  
commenced  
there.

Plan of an  
immediate  
attack on  
the enemy.

enemy, failed of its chief object, the party detached for that purpose having unfortunately been bewildered in the marshes. One of their men only was wounded, and a few insignificant articles, belonging to them, seized upon. At sun set, as the officers were consulting on the best method of obtaining possession of the Fort, their men, in the act of discharging their wet pieces, fired several shot at the enemy. The latter quickly returned the fire of the Colonials; and, in this prelude to the fierce contest now at hand, a private in Capt. Josiah Parker's company was killed. By the council of war, Scott was unanimously advised to march the next morning all the troops, except one company, to the boats about five miles below, there to cross, and attack the enemy in the rear, whilst the company left would be able, from behind the houses to prevent their retreating over the Bridge. Thus would part of the hostile force be destroyed—an important pass secured—the capture of the Fort rendered more easy—the attack on Norfolk accelerated—and dismay struck at once into the enemy. All these were substantial and brilliant objects, nor would the ardor and courage of either officers or men have shrunk from the glorious task, had not subsequent information clearly evinced the expediency of waiting for the main body of the army. To this delay Lieutenant Scott was further induced by the cautious injunctions of Woodford. This excellent officer, who naturally combined prudence with intrepidity, was deeply sensible of the tendency which early operations generally have to determine the character and fate of an appeal to arms; and, in such a cause and at such a juncture, he would reluctantly have staked the destinies of his country, and his own reputation, on contingencies calculated to dazzle and seduce, but, in themselves, extremely hazardous. To the prudential maxims, and matured system of action, inculcated on his mind by the wisdom and experience of the illustrious Washington himself, he had resolved steadily to adhere <sup>(1)</sup>; and the authority under whose direction he acted, had uniformly recommended to him discretion and wariness <sup>(2)</sup>. Besides, a diversion in his favour, by an attack on Norfolk and Portsmouth, was, at this very time, preparing in Williamsburg; and, from North Carolina, the assistance of a body of troops, then stationed at Currituck, within a day's march of the Great Bridge, had been generously tendered. Of all this, Woodford was fully apprized. Under such circumstances, though pleased with the enthusiasm of the troops, and confidently relying on their bravery, he thought that a com-

---

(1) Appendix, No. 5.

(2) Ibidem, No. 6.



# CHAP. IV.

That plan is  
relinquish-

Two compa-  
nies of disaf-  
fected mili-  
tia dispers-  
ed by Wells

Woodford  
marches  
from Suffolk  
to the Great  
Bridge, De-  
cember 2

Operations  
there

plate and decisive victory would not be too dearly pur-  
chased at the price of some inconsiderable delay ; and his  
ideas on this subject happening ultimately to coincide with  
those impressed on Lieutenant Scott's mind by more par-  
ticular enquiries into the enemy's force, the projected at-  
tack was for the present relinquished. The patriots con-  
tented themselves with throwing up a strong breast-work,  
and stationing under cover, within one hundred and sixty  
yards of the hostile Fort, a party of choice riflemen, whose  
unerring fire sorely galled their opponents. Major Spots-  
wood, with two companies of regulars, advanced to rein-  
force the detachment already at the Great-Bridge ; and a  
body of volunteers was stationed between that post and  
Suffolk, in order to keep open the necessary communicati-  
on, and to cut off all sources of intelligence to the enemy  
from that quarter. Many of the inhabitants rallied round  
their country's standard, whilst others still adhered to  
Dunmore. To disarm these, scouting parties explored the  
adjacent country in every direction. Two companies of  
militia who had assembled, in conformity to the late Go-  
vernor's orders, were in one of those excursions, dispersed  
by Colonel Wells, at the head of a party of Volunteers,  
and their officers secured.

After a short stay at Suffolk, the interval of which was  
actively employed in providing for the security of the ad-  
jacent country, and in procuring new supplies of military  
implements, Woodford himself marched with the main bo-  
dy of the troops, towards the Great Bridge, where he ar-  
rived on the 2d day of December. He found the enemy  
posted on the otherside of the Bridge, in a stockade Fort,  
with two 4 pounders, some swivels and a few other small  
pieces. Their whole force amounted to about 250 men ;  
nearly 200 regulars, including the Grenadiers of the 14th  
regiment, and a body of Norfolk volunteers ; the rest a  
motley and despicable mixture of blacks and whites, com-  
manded by Sergeants of the regular troops, and by disaf-  
fected individuals, acting as officers. Woodford immedi-  
ately proceeded to raise a strong breast work, on the low-  
er part of the street, adjacent to the causeway ; and, in  
advance of that breast work, centinels were posted, under  
cover of large heaps of rubbish, at a small distance from  
the Bridge, some parts of which the enemy had purposely  
destroyed. At the same time, batteries were commenced  
for the cannon hourly expected, in a situation whence it  
might play with the greatest advantage upon the hostile  
Fort. By his instructions, Woodford was authorised to call  
in sufficient aid from the minute men and militia of the  
neighbouring Counties ; but these, with the exception of a  
few individuals could not be relied on ; and had not it been  
for the timely arrival of the detachment under Lieutenant  
Scott, it is probable that several other Counties besides

CHAP.  
IV.

Offer of  
troops from  
North Carol-  
ina, accept-  
ed  
December 4

Norfolk and Princess-Anne, would have joined Dunmore. Even among those, who, in that quarter, resorted to the standard of their Country, few were disposed to act with vigor. These circumstances rendered the prompt and efficient aid of the troops offered by North-Carolina highly desirable.—Accordingly, Woodford urged their co-operation, recommending to their able and gallant Commander, Col. Robt. Howe, to bring no men but such as were well provided with arms, and announcing his intention to order them to be furnished with provisions from the Commissary, in the same manner as the Virginia troops, until he should receive further directions, on that head, from the proper authority. Howe, no less ardent than sincere in the popular cause eagerly anxious to promote the glorious object for which he and his men had taken the field, overjoyed, besides, at recognizing in Woodford the brother-officer, the acquaintance, and the friend, (for, in the last war, they had, on the banks of the Holston, known and esteemed each other) expressed a cheerful readiness to effect with all possible dispatch the contemplated junction, and promised his most active exertions in procuring the warlike implements desired. Four or five hundred men, with some cannon and ammunition, might, he informed Woodford, be immediately expected at the Camp, and there were, at different places in North-Carolina, nine hundred men in motion to join the Virginians. Only part of this auxiliary force speedily reached the Great-Bridge; and Colonel Howe himself, owing to unavoidable delays, did not arrive there till the 11th. Much was done, in the mean time to invigorate and regularize the new army and to soften the chilling rigours of a winter-campaign, to men suddenly taken from their houses, and yet unaccustomed to military hardships, at all times unpleasant, but peculiarly severe at so inclement a season. If even in the maturity of consolidated Governments, in the lap of national wealth and power, and under the vivifying controul of an active, vigilant, and experienced administration, armies are often known to suffer from famine, disease, asperity of season, and other incidental calamities more than from the fire and sword of the enemy, it is easily conceived that in this infant state of Virginia, as a Belligerent, her troops must have been subjected to many inconveniencies and deprivations. On their march to the Great-Bridge, the conveyance of the baggage of the officers and soldiers had, from want of pack horses, pack-saddles, and public waggons, been attended with considerable delays and difficulties; and this circumstance alone, independently of the great expence which it must occasionally produce, threatened to render inactive, on the most pressing emergencies, a large portion of the troops, and materially to injure the military operations of the country.

CHAP.  
IV.

The barren region in which the army was now stationed afforded but a scanty supply of corn and forage for the horses; and as to the men, their uncomfortable situation is strongly depicted in a letter from Woodford to the commander in chief then at Williamsburg. "We are here," he writes, in mud and mire, exposed to every hardship that can be conceived, except the want of provisions, of which, however, our stock is but small. The men suffer for shoes, and if ever soldiers deserved a second blanket in any service, they do in this. Our stock of ammunition much reduced—no bullet-moulds that were good for any thing furnished, to run up our lead, 'till those sent the other day by Mr. Page.—If these necessities and better arms, had been furnished in time for this detachment, they might have prevented much trouble and great expence to the Colony. Most of those arms, I received the other day from Williamsburg, are rather to be considered as lumber than fit to put into men's hands in the face of an enemy. I hope we shall be better armed in a few days."

Yet, in the midst of so many hardships calculated to impair the body, and depress the mind, Woodford and his brave companions enjoyed perfect health and unabated cheerfulness. By the most powerful of all moral stimulants, the love of country, they were animated and supported. This noble and sacred sentiment never fails to stamp on the defenders of liberty, a character which honorably distinguishes them from the satellites of mad ambition, and iron-sceptered despotism. It is this sentiment which raises men above effeminate, creeping, cowardly, selfish, and ignoble passions, breathes into them boldness, constancy, heroism, and "sends them into the battles of their country, armed with holy and irresistible enthusiasm."\* The fervid and eloquent letters of several influential members of the Convention, greatly contributed to feed the generous flame.



## CHAPTER V.

*Meeting of the Convention—E. Pendleton is appointed President—Further operations at the Great Bridge—State of the Carolina troops—The disaffected destroy Bachelor's mill-dam—Alarm and preparations of Dunmore—Affair of the Great Bridge—Fordyce is killed and his men routed—British loss—Humanity of the Virginians—The British evacuate the Fort—Woodford is reinforced—Resolves to march against Norfolk—Alarm in that town—Declaration to the people of Princess-Anne and Norfolk counties—Effects thereof—Petitions addressed to Woodford—Relief afforded to the Highlanders—Declarations issued by the Convention—Woodford enters Norfolk—Resigns the chief command to Colonel Howe—Message to the magistrates of Norfolk—Not answered—Proceedings in Norfolk—Subsequent events—American force under Howe—Arrival of the frigate Liverpool—Captain Belknap's message—Burning of Norfolk—Some differences among the officers—Financial and other difficulties of the Colony—Want of salt severely felt—Colonial forces increased—P. Henry resigns—Effervescence caused by this resignation soon subsides.*

The Delegates met at Richmond on the 1st day of December. It had now become necessary for them to appoint a new President. Peyton Randolph was no more. That illustrious citizen, distinguished, at first, by the eminence of his forensic station, and afterwards by the abilities, zeal, integrity, and dignity which he displayed in the higher offices of public life, had been several times elected Speaker of the house of Burgesses. On the 20th of March, 1775, he was unanimously appointed President of the first Convention; and on the 11th of August following, first nominated one of the Delegates for Virginia to the General Congress.\* A new and well merited honour awaited him

Meeting of  
the Conven-  
tion.  
December 1

\* The vote stood as follows :

For P. Randolph,	89,	Thomas Nelson,	66,
R. H. Lee,	88,	R. Bland,	61,
Thomas Jefferson,	85,	G. Wythe,	58,
D. Harrison,	83,		

## CHAP.

## V.

there. Without one dissentient voice, he was called to pre- side over that great and venerable body ; and while attend- ing it, a third time, on the 22d day of October, a sudden stroke of apoplexy, deprived America of this virtuous firm, and wise patriot, in the 54th year of his age. The re- mains of this worthy Patriot were afterwards brought from Philadelphia to Williamsburg by Edmund Randolph, his ne- phew and, in November 1776, deposited in the family vault, in the College-Chapel, with suitable funeral solemnities.— A short time before his departure for the general continen- tal Congress, the convention, observing with great concern, that he was much indisposed, recommended to him to re- tire for the present from the fatigues of public duty, ten- dering to him, at the same time, their unfeigned thanks for his unremitted attention to the important interests of his Country, and his unceasing application to, and able, faith- ful, and impartial discharge of the duties of his office ; and assuring him that he had the warmest wishes of the Con- vention for a speedy return of health, and an uninterrupted enjoyment of every felicity. R. C. Nicholas was, on the following day, appointed to act as President during Mr. Randolph's indisposition or absence, an appointment which did him great honour, and upon which he reflected the splendor of his own worth, during the remainder of the session.—To fill the vacancy thus produced by the lament- ed death of Mr. Randolph, no person was deemed better qualified than the venerable Edmund Pendleton. He was accordingly elected President. After taking into consi- deration a dispatch from Woodford respecting his situa- tion, and that of Lord Dunmore and his motley auxilia- ries, and solemnly enjoining to the Commander of the for- ces actually in the field, to risk as little as possible the success of his arms, at so important a crisis, and, if his num- bers should not, in his judgment, afford a moral probabili- ty of answering the purposes of the expedition, immedi- ately to request the assistance of the troops offered by North Carolina, the Convention adjourned till Monday following, then to meet in Williamsburg. We have al- ready stated the measures of Woodford in regard to the North-Carolina reinforcements. Colonel Wells, who had joined the Patriots at the head of a few volunteers, was dispatched to meet those reinforcements, and to collect and transmit, certain information of every circumstance relative to their march.

In the mean time, an almost incessant firing was kept up at the Great-Bridge, between the Patriots and Dun-

Edmund  
Pendleton is  
appointed  
President.

R. Bland having declined the appointment, on account of his advanced age, and received the warmest thanks of the Convention for his past services, P. Randolph succeeded in his stead. After P. Randolph's death, C. Braxton was appointed to succeed him in Congress.

more's troops. On the side of the Virginians, the loss was inconsiderable, as from the 1st to the 9th of December, only two men appear to have been killed, and one wounded. On the side of the enemy, many were seen to fall, especially from the destructive fire of the riflemen, whom Woodford had directed not to discharge their pieces without a good chance of effect. Between the boat-guards of both parties, several skirmishes took place, in which the colonials had the advantage, and many Blacks were made to expiate their brutal rashness. A number of these, having crossed over from the Norfolk side, set fire to the house nearest to the Bridge. The flames rapidly spread, and, in the space of a few minutes, their fury destroyed five houses, most of them extremely valuable. One of the incendiaries was shot down by the American sentinels; but no attempt was made to extinguish the fire and save the buildings, because the intense light produced by the conflagration would have exposed the men to too much danger from the artillery of the hostile Fort. Among the various occurrences of this petty and preparatory warfare, the following particularly deserves to be noticed — Woodford, receiving intelligence that the enemy's boat-guard might be attacked to advantage by a party crossing a mile below, near a place where his own boat-guard, in sufficient force, lay concealed in a cove, detached, on the 3d day of December, Captain Taliaferro, with a party of sixty men, who were directed secretly to station themselves in the neighborhood, cross in the night, and, under proper and safe guides to advance to the back of the enemy's post. A hope was entertained, that if they found a ready passage, and were faithfully conducted, the enemy's guard would be cut off between two fires. Taliaferro had discretionary powers to return, or to maintain the post on the other side, in the event of success, and if the situation and other circumstances were favorable. Should the post be retained, it was Woodford's intention immediately to send there an adequate reinforcement. Unfortunately, the boat which was to have conveyed the detachment over the river, could not be brought to act till the morning, and this disappointment induced Taliaferro to apply for new instructions. Captain Nicholas, with 42 men, had already been sent to reinforce him; but upon the intelligence of the unforeseen difficulties which threatened to render the plan of a surprise abortive, Woodford ordered Colonel Stevens to take command of the whole. About 12 o'clock, the ensuing night, the Virginians crossed the river, marched close up to the enemy's sentinels without being discovered, and were on the point of cutting them off, or silently securing them, when one of the latter gave the alarm, and fired. This fire was immediately returned, but from too much eagerness and impetuosity, some confusion took place, and the

## CHAP.

## V

---

Further operations at the great bridge.



**CHAP.** original design was not so well executed as it had been planned. The object in view, however, was so far accomplished as to disperse the enemy's guard, destroy their fortifications, and burn the house which afforded them shelter. A Negro perished in the flames, another was shot, and two were taken prisoners. Four muskets fell into the hands of the victors. The gallantry of the men who composed the detachment, and the intrepidity of their officers, were conspicuous on this occasion; while the barbarous spirit of the enemy exhibited itself in the circumstance of gashed and cut balls being found on the black prisoners, who stated that savage and detestable practice was jocularly termed by Dunmore's satellites. "a fit preparation for the flesh of Virginians." Against the slaves taken in arms, Woodford's instructions directed him to proceed according to the rules of war, and all the officers loudly called for their prompt, unmitigated, and exemplary punishment. However, as a counter-proclamation in answer to that of Dunmore, was shortly to be issued by the Convention, and as, upon a subject which involved the life of man, that humane commander wished to have the explicit orders of the supreme authority, he postponed all measures more harsh than strict confinement. Beside these two black prisoners, several other negroes had fallen into his hands, together with Captain Hodges and John Royal, a Baker, apprehended in the act of conveying provisions to the ministerial army. The fate of these individuals, and of such others as might afterwards be placed in a similar situation, Woodford rather chose to be determined by the wisdom of the great national council, than left to his own discretion.

State of the  
Carolina  
troops.

At this time colonel Wells returned from North-Carolina. The intelligence which he brought of the ardor, sincerity and bravery of the expected auxiliaries, was highly pleasing: but his account of their arms, ammunition, and other military implements, damped, in some degree, the sanguine hopes which their approach had inspired. (1)

The disaffected destroy Bachelor's mill-dam.

The malignity of the disaffected could not be restrained even by the terrors now hanging over their heads. Upon the road from the Great Bridge to Suffolk, Bachelor's mill-dam, which afforded a passage over Deep Creek, was by some of them purposely broken down, and Dunmore promised to station in a few days, a party at that place. In this, however, he was anticipated by the vigilance and activity of Woodford, who quickly repaired the damage; and established there a force sufficiently strong to protect the passage of waggons to his troops. This new evidence of the hostile spirit which pervaded the adjacent country, induced him again to press on the Convention the expediency of prompt and considerable reinforcements, as he fore-

saw that, even after the reduction of the Fort at the Great Bridge, a garrison must be left at this important pass, and military guards stationed at several other points, in order to awe the disaffected, at least, into an inactive neutrality or to crush their criminal attempts at the very moment of their birth.

Every information from prisoners, scouts and individuals friendly to the cause of America, indicated the alarm and consequent activity of Dunmore, in his preparations both for defensive and offensive measures. Intrenchments and batteries were hastily constructed at Norfolk; the Blacks and the Tories were embodied and furnished with arms, and the country people forced to drive their cattle, and convey various other supplies into the town. A large body of Highlanders, who had just arrived with their wives and children, and whose original destination was a neighboring colony, where the labors of husbandry, and other peaceful occupations had been held out to them, were brought to Norfolk, in some of the tenders, to recruit Dunmore's army, already reinforced from other quarters. At the same time daily accessions increased the force at the Great Bridge, where it was still hoped to arrest the progress of the Patriots, and even to annihilate their rising ascendancy, and by a signal victory to strike a deadly blow at colonial resistance in the South.

An ingenious stratagem contributed to encourage that delusive hope, and precipitated the operations at the Great Bridge to a conclusion equally glorious and useful to Virginia. A servant belonging to Major Marshall, being properly tutored, deserted to Dunmore, and reported that Woodford had at the bridge, not more than 300 shirt-men, an appellation contemptuously bestowed by the enemy on the Virginian soldiers, because most of them were dressed in hunting shirts. Dunmore's usual wariness entirely forsook him on this occasion. Giving implicit faith to the deserter's statement, he eagerly caught at the bait, and hastily forming a scheme to surprise the Patriots in their intrenchments, dispatched captain Leslie with all the regulars, nearly 200 in number. This detachment arrived at the Great Bridge on the 9th of December, about 3 o'clock in the morning. Three hundred black and white slaves immediately joined it. Planks were laid across the Bridge, and the enemy began to cross just after the Virginians had beaten the reveillee, a moment very injudiciously fixed upon by the assailants, if they intended a surprise, and highly favorable to a vigorous resistance on the other side, as all the men there, must, of course, have been under arms. Capt. Fordyce at the head of his Grenadiers, amounting to about 60, led the van; and Lieutenant Battut commanded the advanced party, while Leslie appeared in the rear, heading

CHAP.

V.

Alarm and  
preparations  
of Dunmore.

Affair at  
the Great  
Bridge, Dec-  
ember 9.

CHAP. the Blacks and Tories. This last corps, during the whole  
V. of the attack, did not advance farther than the Bridge.

As it had been usual with both parties to usher in each day by the discharge of some guns, the first firing of the ministerialists did not create any extraordinary alarm on the part of the Virginians. Soon, however, the real design of the enemy, who were discovered rapidly advancing over the Bridge, became manifest. Adjutant Blackburn was first heard to call out, *Boys, stand to your arms!* and the vigilant and intrepid Bullitt, then stationed at some distance on the left, alarmed Lieutenant Travis, who commanded Captain Meade's company at the Breast-work, and himself quickly repaired thither. Woodford and Spotswood immediately pressed down, the one to the Breast-work in front, and the other to the alarm-post under his command, about 250 yards distant. A heavy and tremendous fire now opened on the British column. The whole of this, except Leslie's corps, proceeded along the causeway, which admitted only of a few men's marching abreast, and approached the intrenchments with fixed bayonets, displaying in their advance the most admirable coolness and intrepidity. Beside the terrible fire that galled them in front, they were enfiladed by a small body of colonials, whom Colonel Stevens, of the minute Battalion had collected and posted on an eminence, rather more than one hundred yards to the left. The multiplied dangers of this appalling situation had no effect on the gallant Fordyce, and his undaunted followers. They still moved onward with the same firm and rapid step. About 45 yards from the Breast-work, as this heroic leader was triumphantly waving his hat to those in the rear, a ball struck him in the knee, upon which he stumbled and fell. Anxious, however, to conceal from his troop this discouraging circumstance, he instantly rose up, lightly brushed his knee, as if his fall had been merely accidental, and continued to lead them on to the attack. They were now within a few yards of the Breast-work, with fixed bayonets, keeping up, as they advanced, a brisk and regular fire, when, by the advice of Colonel Bullitt, it is said, several riflemen simultaneously discharged their pieces at Fordyce, who immediately fell, pierced with fourteen balls. The death of their Commander was for the British the signal of an irretrievable defeat. The officer next to Fordyce in authority was mortally wounded; and Lieutenant Battut, who had been shot in the leg, lay prostrate on the ground. Many privates had fallen. In this desperate situation, a precipitate retreat towards the Fort was the only resource left to the assailants.

December 9  
Fordyce is  
killed.

and his men  
routed.

Nor were they allowed to seek their way back without a warm and vigorous pursuit. At the entrance of the Island, however, they were rallied by Captain Leslie, who



CHAP.  
V.

December 5

now turned against the pursuing victors two pieces of cannon, which, during the attack, had played on the breast-work. To answer this fire with success, the Virginians had no artillery, and although in the ardor of inherent courage, and the resistless enthusiasm of victory, the troops loudly called for an immediate assault on the enemy's fortifications, regardless of their own want of cannon, and of the formidable and destructive volleys, which that of their opponents threatened to pour upon them, Woodford, faithful to the injunctions of the Convention, and to the dictates of his own cautions, calm, and circumspective, yet fearless spirit, thought it better not to endanger by so hazardous an attempt, the safety of his country, and the honor of his arms. It was, however, determined to dislodge the enemy from the island. To effect this, it became necessary to occupy a projecting point, from which the riflemen might act to the greatest advantage; but this station the Virginians could not reach without being exposed, in the whole advance towards it, to the tremendous effects of the enemy's cannon. Colonel Stevens, who never calculated the danger of an enterprize, but merely considered the honour and utility which it promised, readily took upon himself the performance of this arduous service. He was so fortunate as to gain, at the head of one hundred men, chiefly riflemen, the desired post without sustaining any loss, and there stationed his party, to the right of the British, behind the houses on the point. The incessant and unerring fire of the Virginian marksmen soon drove the enemy from the Island. In their hasty and promiscuous flight, they left behind them the two pieces of cannon, together with several dead and wounded.

The scheme of an immediate attack upon the Fort, was now renewed by Colonel Bullitt with additional impetuosity. Under the present consternation of the enemy, that scheme certainly promised considerable facility, and opened a rational and animating prospect both of local success and of distant advantage. The undelayed capture of the Fort might have led to a surprise of Dunmore and the Tories in Norfolk, struck at the root of a troublesome predatory war, and by creating temporary embarrassment in the early measures of the enemy, usefully retarded hostilities on a more extensive scale. Woodford, however, apprehensive of a feint and ambuscade, and, beside the preponderating motives to which we have already alluded, influenced by the prevalent, though eventually groundless report that the body of Highlanders before mentioned, had been marched up to reinforce Leslie, persisted in that prudent system which the awful responsibility now resting upon him evidently sanctioned.

In this action, the loss of the British was uncommonly

CHAP.  
V.

December 1  
British loss.

severe, considering the number of the troops actually engaged. Beside Lieutenant Battut, 17 prisoners were taken, all of them covered with wounds. Every officer was either killed or disabled, and only eleven of Fordyce's Grenadiers survived. Captain Leslie experienced in the poignancy of private sorrow, a melancholy aggravation of the disgrace and humiliation attendant on the vanquished soldier. His Brother, mortally wounded, and faint with loss of blood, had scarcely reached the Fort, when he sank into his arms and expired. Woodford supposed, at first, that the number of the British dead did not exceed fifty; but from the great effusion of blood subsequently observed on the Bridge and in the Fort, from the account of the sentries who saw many corpse conveyed out of the Fort to be interred, and from several other circumstances, he was ultimately induced to believe that many more of the enemy must have fallen in this short, but murderous engagement. Their loss was afterwards ascertained to have amounted to 102 killed and wounded. On the side of the Virginians, not a man was lost, and only one received a slight wound.

Humanity  
of the Vir-  
ginians.

The humanity of the Virginians after the battle, was no less conspicuous, than their intrepidity during the engagement. The wounded prisoners were treated with a delicate, and, indeed, tender attention. The gallant Fordyce was interred with all the military honors due to his rank; and the sympathy as well as the admiration of the conquerors, attended him to the tomb. The British commander was allowed to remove and bury his other dead, upon condition of not firing upon the Virginia troops, during the performance of this sacred and melancholy office. Lieutenant Battut could not resist an inclination to inform the King's troops of the humane and generous treatment which he experienced. At his request, Ensign Hoomes was dispatched with a flag of truce, and the Lieutenant's letter. He returned with the following answer from the Commander of the Fort. "Captain Leslie presents his compliments to Mr. Battut, and returns Colonel Woodford his sincere thanks for his kind treatment of the prisoners. He is happy Mr. Battut's wound is so slight, but is extremely sorry for the loss of poor Fordyce."

Amid the turbulent scenes of civil discord, and the bloody conflicts of angry war, whenever any of those noble and generous affections which ennoble and dignify our nature, happens to gleam through the sombre tints of the subject before the historian, his feelings are irresistibly soothed into delight, and his heart dilates with manly exultation. This remark applies, with peculiar force to the present occurrence. We view with complacency on the affecting contrast between the conduct of Dunmore, and that of the Virginians.—On one side, systematic treachery, implic-

CHAP.  
V.

December 2,

ble rancor, and a flagrant violation of almost every principle that cements society, and governs mankind—the ruthless Indian, and the no less ferocious African, armed against a colony entitled to redress, and forbearance—the terrors of martial law, wantonly conjured up to intimidate and compel a kindred race of freemen into an unconditional surrender of their inherent and essential rights—on the other, a reluctant, but just and necessary appeal to arms, when all remonstrance fails, and, in the bosom of victory, a magnanimous oblivion of accumulated wrongs, a pious regard to the feelings of humanity, a ready tribute to the gallantry of the foe, and a proud acquiescence in all the usages of civilized war!—Nor was this temperate and honorable spirit confined to Woodford and his army: all the documents before us, both public and private, evince its universal prevalence. “I have been sensibly touched,” writes a distinguished member\* of the Convention, to the Commander of the Virginia forces, “with the treatment of the officer and soldiers made prisoners in the late attempt upon your breast-work. I cannot refrain from expressing my approbation of a conduct, which must do honour, through your delicacy of sentiment, to our national character. To make war against human nature is not our object; but to take up arms against a tyrannical system of oppression, becomes the good and the brave. When, through the chance of war, any of our fellow-subjects, though differing in political opinion, fall into our hands, not only the rites of humanity should be shewn to them, but the utmost tenderness and affection, as it is evident that they are not the authors of our present calamities. In all cases, the vanquished are entitled to lenity. The Convention not only thank, but honour you on this occasion, and applaud your paying the highest tribute to the memory of the brave Captain Fordyce. Such magnanimity will exhibit your character in a most favorable light to your friends and countrymen.”—Other communications expressed in substance the same sentiments, and the solemn homage of the Convention soon crowned these private eulogies. (1)

By their belief of reinforcements dispatched to the enemy, and their consequent expectation of a new attack, the Virginians had been induced to remain under arms. This precaution, however, proved unnecessary. Nothing was attempted to relieve or strengthen Leslie, who, in the course of the ensuing night, evacuated the fort, of which the Provincials took possession the next morning. They found in it some warlike implements and other objects,

The British  
evacuated  
the Fort.

\* Mr. John Banister.

(1) Appendix, No. 8.



**CHAP. V.** which, in their precipitate retreat, the enemy had not been able to remove. (1)

Woodford is reinforced.

The representations of Woodford to the Convention, his urgent and repeated applications for reinforcements, ammunition, and other supplies produced the desired effect. He received a considerable accession both of men and military stores. Surgeons and medicines were likewise provided. Part of the reinforcements consisted of choice riflemen from the upper counties of Virginia, and the rest, of two detachments of the North-Carolina troops, under Colonel Vail and Colonel Howe, with some cannon and ammunition.

Resolves to march against Norfolk.

Alarm in that town.

The plans of Woodford to improve advantages so gloriously and so happily obtained had, for a moment, been fluctuating and undefined. The combination of so many favourable circumstances put an end to all uncertainty. It was resolved to march to Norfolk, the strong hold of ministerial power and the focus of hostile enterprize; and a numerous party, under Colonel Stevens' was immediately detached to Kemp's landing, with orders to secure, in the neighborhood of that place, every person known to have left Norfolk, since the battle of the Great-Bridge. Among the individuals arrested in consequence of these orders, one William Calvert reported that he was present when Dunmore received the news of the defeat. His Lordship, frantic with rage, swore in his impotent ravings, that he would hang the boy who brought the information. The intrenchments were hastily abandoned; more than 20 pieces of cannon spiked, and dismantled; and the fleet resorted to by the late Governor and many of the disaffected, with their families, and the most portable and most valuable of their effects, as the only asylum against the impending vengeance of the Patriots. Nothing but trepidation, shame, and despair was now to be seen among those rash and infatuated boasters, who lately hurled defiance and insult in the face of the Virginians—who, with ferocious joy and presumptuous confidence, spoke of easy triumphs over them—considered their noble enthusiasm as a momentary effervescence of popular phrenzy—denied their courage as well as their ability to resist ministerial omnipotence—and, in their dreams of ideal conquest, dealt around confiscation, proscription, and death. The first evidence which Dunmore gave of his humbled and cowering spirit, was a proposal for an exchange of prisoners. This measure, evidently desirable on both sides, was retarded by an unlucky mistake. (2)

(1) Appendix, No. 9.

(2) Ibidem, No. 10.

On the 11th, and previously to the march of the detachment-under Col. Stevens, Woodford had issued the following declaration :

CHAP.  
V.

*" To the Inhabitants of Princess-Anne and Norfolk Counties.*

" The late action at this place, it is hoped, will convince you that we are able to give you that protection which we were sent to afford you ; and this is to inform all persons, that notwithstanding you have taken the oath prescribed by Lord Dunmore, and some of you have actually taken arms against your country, still it is not my design to injure any of your persons or properties. On the contrary, I mean to protect them. and afford you all the assistance in my power. For these reasons, I expect you will behave well to all my parties, and view all the passes and other places, where an enemy may be concealed, and give me, or the highest officer of my troops, immediate notice thereof I expect a number of men will assemble at Kemps' to protect that place, till the arrival of the troops, and make the best provision for our reception. The Commissary will pay the usual price for all supplies.—Given at the Great Bridge, this 11th day of December, 1775.

Declaration to the people of Princess-Anne and Norfolk counties, December 11.

WM. WOODFORD."

In consequence of this declaration of Woodford, many of the inhabitants resorted to his camp. Among these, some had taken the part of the enemy through mere necessity, and were sincerely inclined to espouse their country's cause, whilst others were only intimidated into the affectation of repentance and the mockery of patriotism. To the former, all reasonable indulgence was extended ; and on the latter, the vigilant eye of distrust was kept incessantly open. Such individuals as were taken in arms, were sent to various places of confinement, coupled each of them to one of his black fellow-soldiers, with a pair of hand-cuffs. This was considered as a just stigma on the whites, for having voluntarily entered the field against their countrymen with such auxiliaries.

Effects thereof.

Though many inhabitants of Norfolk were impelled by their fears to take shelter on board the ships, a much greater number necessarily remained behind in that devoted place—some unwilling to abandon their property without a struggle—others trusting in the moderation of the conquerors—and the majority, viewing with terror, if they deserted their homes, the dreary prospect of comfortless exile and unmitigated want ; and deriving, beside, from their obscurity in life, a well grounded hope of escaping the resentment, and even the notice of the victors. By all these, a petition was addressed, in terms of humblest supplication, *" to the right honorable army, entitled*

Petitions addressed to Woodford December 11.

CHAP. V. *the sons of liberty and property, in and over the Colony and Dominion of Virginia.*" This petition contained hyperbolic expressions of warm attachment to the common cause, a more sincere statement of great alarm for the persons and property of the petitioners; and concluded by intreating not only indulgence, but relief and protection. Another petition was received from that body of Highland emigrants, whose original destination was the colony of North Carolina, but who from stress of weather had been driven into the Bay of Chesapeake, and there intercepted by one of Dunmore's armed ships, and brought, against their own inclination, into Virginia, to reinforce the ministerial army. (1) They represented their blameless intentions, the compulsion under which they had acted, and the distress into which they had been plunged, in consequence of their vessel being detained by Dunmore, and their wives and children surrendered to the horrors of hunger and nakedness, in the midst of strangers. Both these petitions were brought to Woodford, whilst yet at the Great-Bridge, and by him referred to the Convention; but in respect to the wretched objects of the latter, his active benevolence did not permit him to delay that protection and assistance which their pitiable situation so imperiously claimed. Certain that the liberality of the Convention perfectly accorded with the generous impulses of his own heart, and would ratify every act of anticipated kindness, he hastened to relieve their most pressing wants; and soon after, when in possession of Norfolk, Colonel Howe and himself, in conformity with the injunctions of the supreme colonial authority, caused those wretched emigrants to be supplied with provisions and clothes at the public expence, and enabled them to proceed to their destined settlement in North-Carolina.—Sound policy seemed to sanction, in this case, the suggestions of humanity. It was eminently desirable to secure the attachment of these Highlanders, and other emigrants from the same country, in favour of the American cause. They constituted in North-Carolina a formidable body, seated in a part of that colony, whence any attempt made by them against the common interest, might prove extensively injurious. They were well known to cherish great native partialities, to be warm in friendship, and inexorable in resentment. It might be supposed that no influence could so easily attract, no tie so firmly bind them to the American cause, as acts of kindness and benevolence generously extended to their friends and relatives, under this undeserved as well as unexpected pressure of poverty and distress.—Such might well be the calculations

Relief afforded to the Highlanders



of human prudence at this time, though subsequent events\* established their fallacy, and demonstrated the extreme difficulty, if not the utter impossibility, of eradicating prejudices strengthened by every circumstance of early education, and entwined round the heart in such a manner as to close its avenues against all other sentiments.

On the 13th December the patriot-army about 1000 strong, began a forced march towards Norfolk, leaving behind the waggon, heavy baggage, and prisoners, under the guard of Major Marshall, at the head of three companies, with orders to march, as soon as the causeway and the Bridge should be repaired. On the same day, and on the day following, the Convention, aware that in a juncture like the present, no less depended on the favorable impression of the public mind than on the success of their arms, issued two declarations, which their importance entitles to a place in the body of our narrative.

Declarations issued by the Convention. December 13.

#### VIRGINIA, DECEMBER 13, 1775.

*By the Representatives of the People of the Colony and Dominion of Virginia, assembled in general Convention—*

#### A DECLARATION.

Whereas Lord Dunmore, by his proclamation, dated on board the ship William, the 7th November, 1775, hath presumed, in direct violation of the constitution and the laws of his country, to declare martial law in force and to be executed throughout this Colony, whereby our lives, our liberty, and property, are arbitrarily subjected to his power and direction; and whereas the said Lord Dunmore, assuming powers which the King himself cannot exercise, to intimidate the good people of this colony into a compliance with his arbitrary will, hath declared those who do not immediately repair to his standard, and submit in all things to a government not warranted by the constitution, to be in actual REBELLION and thereby to have incurred the penalties inflicted by the laws for such offences and hath offered freedom to the servants and slaves of those he has pleased to term REBELS, arming them against their masters, and destroying the peace and happiness of his majesty's good and faithful subjects, whose property is rendered insecure, and whose lives are exposed to the dangers of a general insurrection. We, as guardians of the lives and liberty of the people, our constituents, conceive it to be indispensably our duty to protect them against every species of despotism, and to endeavor to remove those fears with which they are so justly alarmed. If it were possible the understanding of men could be so blinded that every gleam of reason might be lost, the hope, his Lordship says, he hath

---

\* Especially Macdonald's expedition, and concomitant transactions.

## CHAP.

## V.

ever entertained of an accommodation between Great Britain and this colony, might now pass unnoticed; but truth, justice, and common sense, must ever prevail, when facts can be appealed to in their support. It is the peculiar happiness of this colony that his Lordship can be traced as the source of innumerable evils and one of the principal causes of the misfortune under which we now labour, a particular detail of his conduct since his arrival in this colony can be considered only as repetition, it having been already fully published to the world by the proceedings of the General Assembly and Convention; but the unremitting violence with which his Lordship endeavors to involve this country in the most dreadful calamities, constantly affords new matter for the attention of the public, and will remove every imputation of ingratitude to his Lordship, or of injustice to his character.—His Lordship is pleased to ascribe the unworthy part he hath taken against this colony, to a necessity, arising from the conduct of its inhabitants, whom he hath considered in a *rebellious* state, but who know nothing of *rebellion*, except the name. Ever zealous in support of tyranny, he hath broken the bonds of society, and trampled justice under his feet. Had his Lordship been desirous of effecting an accommodation of these disputes, he hath had the most ample occasion of exerting his interest and abilities; but that he never had in view any such salutary end, must evidently appear from the whole tenor of his conduct. The supposed design of the Canada bill, having been to throw down upon us a merciless and savage enemy, the present manœuvres amongst the Roman Catholics in Ireland, and the scheme concerted with Doctor Connelly, and other vile instruments of tyranny, which have appeared by the examination of the said Connelly, justify the supposition, and most fully evince his Lordship's inimical and cruel disposition towards us, and can best determine whether we have been wrong in preparing to resist, even by arms, that system of tyranny adopted by the Ministry and Parliament of Great Britain, of which he is become the rigid executioner in this colony. The many depredations, committed also, upon the inhabitants of this colony, by the tenders and other armed vessels, employed by his Lordship for such purposes, the pilfering and plundering the property of the people, and the actual seduction and seizure of their slaves, were truly alarming in their effects, and called aloud for justice and resistance. The persons of many of our peaceable brethren have been seized and dragged to confinement, contrary to the principles of liberty, and the constitution of our country. Yet, have we borne this injurious treatment with unexampled patience, unwilling to shed the blood of our fellow-subjects; who, prosecuting the measures of a British Parliament, would sacrifice our lives or

property to a relentless fury and unabating avarice. If a Governor can be authorised, even by Majesty itself, to annul the laws of the land, and introduce the most execrable of systems, the law martial ; if, by his single fiat, he can strip us of our property, can give freedom to our servants and slaves, and arm them for our destruction, let us bid adieu to every thing valuable in life ; let us, at once, bend our neck to the galling yoke, and hug the chains prepared for us and our latest posterity !

It is with inexpressible concern we reflect upon the distressed situation of some of our unhappy countrymen, who have thought themselves too immediately within the power of Lord Dunmore, and have been induced thereby to remain inactive. We lament the advantage he hath taken of their situation, and at present impute their inactivity, in the cause of freedom and the Constitution, not to any defection or want of zeal, but to their defenceless state ; and whilst we endeavor to afford them succour and to support their rights, we expect they will contribute every thing in their power to effect their deliverance. Yet, if any of our people, in violation of their faith plighted to this colony, and the duty they owe to society, shall be found in arms, or continue to give assistance to our enemies, we shall think ourselves justified, by the necessity we are under, in executing upon them the law of retaliation.

Impressed with a just and ardent zeal for the welfare and happiness of our countrymen, we trust they will, on their part, exert themselves in defence of our common cause, and that we shall all acquit ourselves like freemen, being compelled by the disagreeable, but absolute necessity of repelling force by force to maintain our just rights and privileges : and we appeal to God, who is the Sovereign disposer of all events, for the justice of our cause, trusting to his unerring wisdom to direct our councils, and give success to our arms.

EDMUND PENDLETON, President.

VIRGINIA, DECEMBER 14, 1775.

*By the Representatives of the People of the Colony and Dominion of Virginia, assembled in General Convention—*  
A DECLARATION.

Whereas Lord Dunmore, by his proclamation dated on board the Ship William, off Norfolk, the 7th day of November, 1775, hath offered freedom to such able bodied slaves as are willing to join him, and take up arms against the good people of this colony, giving thereby encouragement to a general insurrection, which may induce a necessity of inflicting the severest punishments upon those unhappy people, already deluded by his base and insidious arts ; and whereas, by an act of the General Assembly now in force in this colony, it is enacted, that all negro or other slaves,



## CHAP.

V.

conspiring to rebel or make insurrection, shall suffer death, and be excluded all benefit of clergy: We think it proper to declare, that all slaves who have been or shall be seduced by his Lordship's Proclamation or other arts, to desert their master's service, and take up arms against the inhabitants of this colony, shall be liable to such punishment as shall hereafter be directed by the General Convention— And to the end, that all such who have taken this unlawful and wicked step, may return in safety to their duty, and escape the punishment due to their crimes, we hereby promise pardon to them, they surrendering themselves to Col. William Woodford, or any other Commander of our troops, and not appearing in arms after the publication hereof— And we do further earnestly recommend it to all humane and benevolent persons in this colony, to explain and make known, this, our offer of mercy, to those unfortunate people.

EDMUND PENDLETON, President.

Woodford enters Norfolk, December 14.

Resigns the chief Command to Col. Howe, December 15.

The army entered Norfolk on the 14th, about 10 o'clock at night. On the morning of the 15th, Col. Howe, having, upon a friendly enquiry, been found entitled, from the nature of his commission, to the precedence of Col. Woodford, assumed the chief command. Howe's appointment was under the authority of Congress; and by the rules of war, all officers with continental commissions took precedence of provincial officers of the like rank. Between two men who justly and sincerely esteemed each other, and whose zeal for the common cause was superior to the petty jealousies of punctilious delicacy, this arrangement produced no abatement of private friendship, no relaxation of public devotedness. On every occasion, Howe consulted Woodford, who cheerfully imparted his advice and his aid. Patriotism harmonized their views in council, and their efforts in battle.

Message to the Magistrates of Norfolk.

Before their arrival in Norfolk, Colonels Woodford and Howe had jointly addressed to the magistrates of that place, the following message:

"To the Mayor, Aldermen, and the inhabitants of the Borough of Norfolk.

"We are marching to Norfolk with no intention to injure the inhabitants of the town, either in their persons or property, unless they should attempt to resist our entrance, or omit to inform us of the intention of any other persons to oppose us. Their being explicit upon this occasion will entitle them to our protection, which they are to expect upon no other condition. The Magistrates of the town must give a positive answer, that we may take our measures accordingly.

WILLIAM WOODFORD.  
ROBERT HOWE.

To this message, which the Magistrates conveyed to Dunmore, on board the fleet for his perusal, no direct and formal answer was given: the annexed letter afforded the only evidence of its having been at all noticed:

CHAP.  
V.

TO WILLIAM WOODFORD, ESQ.

Not answered.

SIR,

"My fellow citizens having done me the honor to  
"nominate me to the Governor for Colonel, or Comman-  
"der in Chief, of the militia of this Borough, His Excel-  
"lency was pleased to approve of their nomination by his  
"commission, dated the 27th of November. I am now,  
"Sir, in the present situation of affairs to expect from you  
"that protection for myself and family that I am entitled  
"to, and what the people of Virginia have always acknow-  
"ledged to be due to the appointments of the Crown.

"With much respect, I am, Sir,

"your most ob't. and most

"humble serv't.

ALEX'R. GORDON."

Norfolk Borough, }  
13th December, 1775. }

The degrading subserviency of the Mayor and Aldermen to the late Governor, their contemptuous silence, and the haughty tone of the above letter, were ill calculated to allay the resentment of the victors, who considered them as so many intentional insults.

Proceed-  
ings in Nor-  
folk.

The night was actively employed in providing for the security of the troops. A skirmish took place in the streets, the original cause of which could not be satisfactorily ascertained, and in which three of the Patriots were wounded. A few disaffected inhabitants fired on the troops from their houses. This naturally produced some alarm, and much irritation. The whole line for a while was kept under arms, and parties were detached to secure obnoxious characters. Willoughby\* and Gordon were arrested, but paroled, upon their property being made answerable for their appearance in the morning. This necessary display of energy struck the Tories with consternation. Their fears were still increased by the prevalent report of a naval armament from the northern Provinces, in aid of Virginia. On this subject, many groundless assertions were made: it was even said, and, for a moment, believed, that the auxiliary fleet had actually appeared in Hampton roads. —Amid the multiplied cares of this eventful night, the wants of the army were not forgotten by the indefatigable

December  
5.

\* A Colonel of Militia under Dunmore's authority. His activity in promoting ministerial despotism, had rendered him peculiarly obnoxious.

CHAP. Woodford. Meat abounded, but flour was extremely  
 V. scarce, in Norfolk. The Commissary received strict orders  
 to secure adequate supplies of Corn, and the mills were im-  
 mediately set to work. A proper attention was likewise  
 paid to procuring for the troops as comfortable quarters  
 as the season and place would allow.

December  
 15.  
 Subsequent  
 events.

In the present posture of affairs, which placed in view of each other, and almost in immediate contact, two hostile parties, inflamed with more than usual irritation, and equally resolved, the one to exert, the other to resist, violence, endless bickering, mutual annoyance, and sharp conflicts became unavoidable. Each side, however, appeared anxiously to guard against the charge of aggression. Several musket balls were, on the night of the 14th, fired at the Otter. The next morning, Captain Squire, who commanded that ship, dispatched a flag of truce to the American chiefs, conveying information of the hostile act. To mere wantonness, not to preconcerted offence, he was willing to ascribe the obnoxious event, and therefore, would forbear firing upon the Town, so long as no injury should be manifestly aimed at his Majesty's ship, and the people under his command. Howe and Woodford stated, in answer, that their men had not been ordered to fire at the Otter, and that the circumstance alluded to in Captain Squire's message, had probably originated in the American guard firing, through mistake, on one of their own parties. On the succeeding day, Captain Squire requested by another flag, to be informed if the American commanders intended to prevent the Army and Navy from being supplied with water and other provisions. The reply was decisive and unequivocal. It stated, that henceforth every possible effort should be used to prevent any communication whatever, between the British forces and Norfolk, or any other part of the colony. This determination, duly matured and never to be shaken, was predicated on the previous outrages and violence of those forces against the persons and property of unarmed citizens. In the afternoon the two ships of war and tenders spread their sails and fell towards the distillery. A large Snow, having on board 4000 bushels of salt, an article, which its now prevalent scarcity rendered of infinite value to the Americans, was, by signal, ordered to follow. This order not having been executed with sufficient celerity, the Snow found herself insulated and unprotected, and was compelled by the American guard, to keep her station. The King Fisher detached a boat to bring her off. When within reach of the American musketry, that boat was menaced with a raking fire, if she should not speedily retrace her course.—She found it expedient to obey, and, undisturbed, rejoined the man of war. The Americans then moored the Snow to the wharf, intending to land the salt, as soon as a proper

December  
 18.



place of deposit could be selected. Upon this, the two men of war, with a large sloop, stood up to their former station, and a flag of truce was sent from the fleet, to urge the immediate delivery of the Snow. At the same time an intention was announced of ordering a boat to take her away, and a peremptory menace of firing at the town, should an attack be made on the King's people. accompanied that declaration With correspondent promptitude and equal resolution, Howe and Woodford answered that the vessel in question had become their prize, and that they would give orders to fire at any boat, attempting to take her away. No attempt of this sort was made. and the whole affair terminated in a few cannon shot being fired upon the town, an impressive, though accidentally harmless prelude to the dire havoc, which was soon to follow!

A return of the forces under the command of Colonel Howe, shews their aggregate to have, at this time, amounted to 1275 men.\*

American force under Howe.

On the 19th, the American Commanders were informed that a Frigate and a Brig had just appeared below, opposite to the pleasure house. The Frigate proved to be the Liverpool, mounting twenty eight guns; and the Brig with her, a store-ship, laden with arms and ammunition. These two vessels had, between them, 400 men on board, but, except the usual complement of marines, none of these were soldiers. This circumstance reanimated the drooping hopes of Dunmore and his followers. The repossession of Norfolk now became the favorite object of their joyful and triumphant anticipations; and, once more, Hampton and all the river-settlements were threatened with fire and sword. On the other side, the Virginians beheld with dauntless eye the dark cloud of peril thus thickening over their heads.

December 19. Arrival of the frigate Liverpool.

As soon as the Liverpool reached Norfolk, Henry Bel-  
lew, her Captain, sent in a flag of truce, to state his wants of fresh provisions, and to ascertain whether the resolution to restrict the King's ships from all supplies was still persevered in. His situation he observed, was awfully imperious. Unless recalled by the power that had sent him, he dared not move. To shed the blood of the innocent and helpless was repugnant to his nature, contrary to his wishes. Yet if his men, exasperated by the prolonged hardships and painful deprivations incidental to a voyage across the atlantic, and stimulated not only by appetites in them-

Captain Bellew's message, December 24.

* Virginia 2d regiment,	-	-	-	-	350 men,
Virginia Minute battalion,	-	-	-	-	165,
Detachment from the 1st Virginia regiment,	-	-	-	-	172,
North-Carolina 2d regiment,	-	-	-	-	438,
North Carolina Volunteers,	-	-	-	-	150,

TOTAL, - 1275.

## CHAP.

## V.

selves resistless, but also by the tempting proximity of land, should break loose in the uncontrollable pursuit of fresh and wholesome nourishment, the result must be obvious to every one. Howe was inclined to relax in favour of Captain Bellew and the people under his command, from the asperity of the restrictive measures lately announced; but he wished to take, on this delicate subject, the sense of the Convention. To that Body, therefore, he referred the Captain's message, and imparted at the same time his own fluctuating thoughts. Their answer was far from decisive. It stated "a consciousness of the hardships resulting to the Navy from the want of fresh provisions; "a reluctance to withhold the desired supplies through any other motive but the imperious dictates of public duty. Captain Bellew, it said, was a stranger to the people of Virginia and to their situation—it was well to inform him that if the hospitality and courtesy uniformly shewn by the Colony to the commanders of his Majesty's ships had, of late, been unhappily interrupted, it was entirely and solely owing to the unwarrantable conduct of some of the Navy towards the inhabitants. Who were the innocent and helpless, whose blood that officer would not wish to shed, the ambiguity of his expression left undetermined; Yet, those very expressions strongly implied that the object of his voyage was hostile and murderous, in relation to part of the citizens.—The Convention ardently wished to find themselves mistaken in these apprehensions, and if Captain Bellew could condescend to inform them or Colonel Howe, that he had come to Virginia on a friendly errand, he might depend on proper respect and attention; if, on the contrary, his design was to aid schemes and efforts inimical to the Colony, he must not blame the inhabitants of Virginia for totally declining to contribute towards their own destruction."

It is evident that such a view of the subject, was ill calculated to remove existing difficulties. Bellew's intentions were sufficiently characterized by the office which he held under the authority of government, and from him it was vain to expect sympathy or defection. Thus no definite line was traced for Howe and Woodford. They were left to the anxiety of that state, where duty and inclination are at variance. To reconcile both as far as to them appeared practicable, they complimented Bellew with fresh provisions for his table, and manifested towards his lady, every respect and attention in their power: but, at the same time, they continued to prevent, with jealous vigilance, those extensive supplies which alone could satisfy impatient and hungering multitudes. This naturally increased the irritation which already prevailed in the fleet, and the resentment of the British was raised to its acme

CHAP.

V.

by the destructive fire of the American riflemen, from the ware-houses and other buildings on the wharves. Every object now wore a gloomy and threatening aspect; every thing announced an approaching storm, big with terror and ruin.

Nor was the cloud long suspended. The first day of January, 1776, a year distinguished in the annals of America, by a series of momentous events, witnessed its burst. Between 3 and 4 o'clock in the afternoon, a heavy cannonade from the frigate *Liverpool*, two sloops of war, and the ship *Dunmore*, opened against the Town. Under cover of the guns, several parties of marines and sailors were landed and set fire to the houses on the wharves. As the wind blew from the water, and the buildings were chiefly of wood, the flames rapidly spread. The efforts of the American commanders and their men to stop the progress and ravages of the fire, proved ineffectual. The conflagration raged for nearly three days, and consumed about nine tenths of the town. Scarcely can even the strongest imagination picture to itself the distress of the wretched inhabitants, most of whom, friends or foes, saw their homes, their property, their all, an indiscriminate prey to the irremediable fury of the flames. The horrors of the conflagration were heightened by the thunder of cannon from the ships and musketry of the hostile parties, that encountered each other in sharp conflict, near the shore, and on the smoking ruins of the devoted town. In these encounters, the British were uniformly repulsed, and driven back to their boats with shame and loss. Of the Americans, by a singular good fortune, none was killed, and only 5 or 6 men wounded, one of whom mortally. Some women and children were, however, reported to have lost their lives. In this affair, the intrepid *Stevens* still added to his fame. At the head of his hardy, indefatigable, and irresistible band, he rushed, with the rapidity of lightening to the water-side, struck a large party of British, who had just landed there, and compelled them to retire, with slaughter and in dismay, to the protection of their wooden walls. In general, during the whole of this afflicting scene, both officers and men evinced a spirit worthy of veterans.

Such was the melancholy event which laid prostrate the most flourishing and richest town in the Colony. Its happy site, combining all those natural advantages which invite and promote navigation and commerce, had been actively seconded by the industry and enterprize of the inhabitants. Before the existing troubles, an influx of wealth was rapidly pouring into its lap. In the two years from 1773 to 1775, the rents of the houses increased from 8,000 to 10,000 *l* a year. Its population exceeded 6,000 citizens, many of whom possessed affluent fortunes. The whole actual loss, on this lamentable occasion, has been

1776.  
Burning of  
Norfolk,  
January 1.



## CHAP.

## V.

computed at more than three hundred thousand pounds sterling ; and the mass of distress attendant on the event is beyond all calculation. Sad catastrophe of a horrid drama, in which a Governor was seen acting so odious a part as to ruin the best town in a Colony, which he still termed his Government, and for which he professed parental solicitude ! What reason of state could palliate such a measure ? Surely, none. The plea or urgent necessity was, at best, futile. Nor is it probable that the assailants intended to destroy that part of the Town only which lay near the water ; for, let us admit that the wind was moderate, and from the shore, two circumstances which the authority of Howe and Woodford positively contradicts, could any reliance be placed on the permanent continuance of so changeable an element as the wind, in any given state ? And if it could, was it, even there, in the power of the conflagrators to prescribe limits to the progress and ravages of the fire ? Desirable as it was for Dunmore to recover Norfolk, garrison it, and maintain himself there, in this, as in many other measures, his impetuous, irascible, vindictive spirit overcame his understanding, and hurried him into absurd and unwarrantable extremes.—In the Gazette issued on board his ship, he charges the Provincials with aiding the spread of the flames ; nay, with themselves setting fire to houses in remote parts of the town, entirely free from the dangers of the original conflagration, and thus converting the seat of industry, commerce, and opulence, into a desolate, barren, and gloomy solitude. This charge repeated by some British Historians, in that feeble and awkward tone, which betrays suspicion and even incredulity, appears to rest on that gross perversion of facts, dignified by statesmen and partymen with the honorable name of *policy*. If, in the tumult and confusion of a scene so propitious to the indulgence of dark, base, and malignant passions, any excess of the kind took place, it was far from being sanctioned by the mandates of either the civil or military authority, on the part of the patriots. During the whole course of the transaction, Howe and Woodford, by their positive orders, their presence, and their personal efforts, contributed, as much as they were able to the extinguishment of the fire. True it is, that when the destruction of the town was nearly completed from the causes and the manner just described, the ruling civil authority directed the American commanders to value the remaining houses, and burn them, with the humane clause of indemnity to the owners. This was done with a view to cut off from the ships every resource, and to annihilate the hopes which the enemy might still entertain of advantageously concentrating his forces at that point. With the same view, several houses and plantations, not included within the precincts of the Town, but

situated within reach of the water, were destroyed, and the proprietors compelled to remove farther into the country with their cattle and provisions. This severity, in many respects fatal, may have been ill-judged and precipitate, but it wears not the wanton, cruel, and savage aspect ascribed to it by Dunmore. Besides, the spirit of the times proudly and indignantly soared above all calculations of local or personal interest. Comfort, ease, and even safety were magnanimously disregarded. "We care not for our towns," says a letter written by a distinguished Patriot of that day, "and the destruction of our houses would not cost us a sigh. I have long since given up mine as lost. I have not moved many of my things—indeed, nothing but my papers, my books, and a few necessaries for house-keeping. I can declare without boasting that I feel such indignation against the authors of our grievances, and the execrable Pirates in our river, and such concern for the public at large, that I have not thought, and cannot think of my own puny person, and insignificant affairs."

Woodford whose health had greatly suffered in this expedition, no less laborious than honorable, now solicited leave of absence; he obtained it for such a time as should be agreed between Colonel Howe and himself. In addition to the fatigues and hardships inseparable from a winter campaign, that zealous and brave officer had occasionally experienced the bitterness of professional disgust, and in this even his pure and ardent patriotism could not silently acquiesce.

The elevation of Patrick Henry to the chief command of the regular colonial forces, was, in the opinion of many, one of those hasty measures into which effervescence of gratitude not unfrequently betrays even public bodies. From the national councils, where his usefulness was pre-eminently conspicuous, that gentleman was called to an important military station, with the duties of which he must, in the nature of things, have been mostly unacquainted; whilst, by an unhappy reaction, the country lost the services of some able officers, whom the pride of former rank would not suffer to act under him; a loss peculiarly to be lamented in the infancy of an arduous struggle, and at a time when Virginia counted only a few military characters possessed of the qualifications necessary for discharging their duty with honour to themselves, and security to the common cause.—Woodford did not decline to act under Henry; yielding to the sublime and powerful impulse which great national emergencies are calculated to produce, he deemed it essentially incumbent on himself to play well the part which he was called to act, without regard to the order in which he was called. Yet, the devotion of the Patriot could not utterly overrule the delicacy

CHAP.  
V.

---

January 6.

Some differences among the officers.

CHAP.

V.

of the soldier. Early in December, 1775, Henry strictly adhering to the letter of a commission, strongly worded, perhaps, beyond the original intention of the person who drew it, had insisted upon Woodford reporting to him, as Commander in chief, the situation of his army, that of the enemy, and other circumstances connected with the expedition against Dunmore. Woodford declared in his answer (here his own words are copied) that he should always esteem himself immediately under Henry's command, and obey accordingly, but that, when sent to command a separate and distinct body of troops, under the immediate instructions of the committee of safety, whenever that body, or the Convention, was sitting, he looked upon it as his indispensable duty to address his intelligence to them, as the supreme power in the Colony. "If I judge wrong," he added, "I hope that honourable body will set me right. I should wish to keep up the greatest harmony between us, for the good of the cause we are engaged in, but cannot bear to be supposed to have neglected my duty, when I have done every thing I conceive to be so." Aware that, in so critical a juncture, a difference between the leaders of the patriotic army would be attended with fatal consequences, the most influential members of the Convention privately interfered, and an open rupture was finally prevented by the following resolution of the committee of safety:

IN COMMITTEE, DECEMBER, 1775.

"Resolved unanimously, That colonel Woodford, although acting upon a separate and distinct command, ought to correspond with colonel Henry, and make returns to him, at proper times, of the state and condition of the forces under his command; and also that he is subject to his orders, when the Convention, or the committee of safety is not sitting, but that whilst either of those bodies are sitting, he is to receive his orders from one of them."

Other causes of disgust are explained by the following passages in two letters from the amiable and patriotic Edmund Pendleton, whose conciliatory temper benignantly beams through the whole of his correspondence.

WILLIAMSBURG, DECEMBER 21, 1775.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The behaviour of some of your inferior officers and soldiers, I am much concerned at; it is not, however, uncommon in new troops unaccustomed to the advantages of discipline, and with young officers, whose martial ardor has not been tempered by experience in service. The popular plan on which these were raised has also, no doubt, contributed not a little to increase the



“ mischief. Perhaps, time and perseverance may cure it.  
 “ \* \* \* \* \*  
 “ \* \* These things, and the ignorance of duty pro-  
 “ bable in every department, must greatly increase your  
 “ trouble and vexation, and if, on a certain occasion, you  
 “ had used more asperity of expression than you did, you  
 “ might justly borrow Hotspur’s excuse for not delivering  
 “ his prisoners, demanded in the moment of hurry and  
 “ fatigue. I hope the check given to some officers, &c.”

CHAP.

V.

WILLIAMSBURG, JANUARY 5, 1776.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I cannot avoid feeling deeply for your disagreeable  
 “ situation—confined in a dirty place—harrassed with  
 “ variety of duty—and chagrined by a popular opposition  
 “ from inferior officers.

“ The sentence of acquittal of Lieutenant B——, is a  
 “ specimen of what is to be expected from the judgment  
 “ of young officers, who are to determine whether them-  
 “ selves shall be subject to the command of superiors, and  
 “ punished for the breach; and what was more mortify-  
 “ ing, the sentence could not be reversed, the ordinance  
 “ not allowing an appeal, in any case of acquittal, to the  
 “ Convention, or committee of safety. However, they did  
 “ not let it pass without a stricture on the Lieutenant,  
 “ whose conduct the Convention declared their highest  
 “ disapprobation of, in their resolution not to determine  
 “ the appeal. You were commended, not blamed for  
 “ making it. I find these many things have made you  
 “ sick, as your last letter is from a feeble hand. I will,  
 “ therefore, endeavour this morning to procure your leave  
 “ of absence, &c.”

As already stated, the desired furlough was granted,  
 but such was the urgency of the public service that Wood-  
 ford did not immediately avail himself of its benefit.

In a colony, whose commerce chiefly consisted in an ex-  
 change of native produce for the commodities and manu-  
 factures of the mother-country, or those of other countries,  
 through her medium, and where even lands, slaves, and  
 other active and productive stock, were sold and purchased  
 by the agency of British merchants, not for gold or silver,  
 but for necessities or luxuries, which, in the hands of  
 those merchants, were always ready to answer the wants  
 and desires of the people, the circulation of the precious  
 metals had generally been inconsiderable. Several causes,  
 among which may be enumerated the remittances made  
 to European mercantile houses, the external exigencies of  
 the Colony, and the fears of those who, calculating the  
 probable duration and effects of the present contest, board-  
 ed up as much gold and silver as they could, now contri-

Financial  
 and other  
 difficulties  
 of the Coly.  
 ny.

CHAP. V. buted to increase the scarcity of specie. Under such circumstances, as taxes were a dangerous expedient at the beginning of a war which had originated in resistance to taxation, it became indispensable to create resources of another nature. The substitution of credit for revenue, was not unknown in the Colonies. In most of them it had been resorted to on anterior occasions; Virginia herself had used it in a former war, but prudently, and without any detriment to public faith, or private interest. Only moderate sums of paper had been emitted, and that emission being attorned on taxes pledged specifically for its redemption, experienced no depreciation. Relying, therefore, on the confidence of the people in the pledges of rulers whose interest was now more intimately than ever incorporated with their own, and on their enthusiasm and patriotism, the Convention resolved to create a paper currency, for the purpose of removing the temporary difficulties that clogged the fiscal operations of Virginia. By an ordinance "for appointing Commissioners to settle the accounts of the Militia lately drawn into actual service, as well as the expence of raising, and providing for, the forces and minute men directed to be embodied for the defence of the Colony," they empowered Robert Carter Nicholas to issue Treasury-Notes for any sum or sums, which might be requisite for the several purposes contemplated, not exceeding, in the whole, the sum of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds; and as an additional security against counterfeits, they ordered those notes to be struck in Virginia.

In order to accomplish this, especially in regard to notes of a small amount, better adapted to the payment of the troops, proper paper and plates were to be procured from distant places, a circumstance necessarily productive of some delay and much inconvenience, as the Treasury was almost entirely drained of specie, and the public exigencies hourly increased. After the emission of the notes, another cause of embarrassment resulted from the confined sphere of their currency. On this subject, let us listen to the Treasurer himself: "One great difficulty, I labour under," he observes in his correspondence with the Virginia Delegates to the Continental Congress, "is to procure proper money to defray expences in the other Colonies. It is to be wished that the Congress would do something to give our paper a general currency; and this, I should think, might be done by establishing an exchange for the Continental money, a considerable part of which, I understand, is issued upon our credit, and surely this must be equally good for our own paper. Besides, it is expected, and, I think, with the greatest reason, that a just proportion of the expences incurred for the necessary defence of this country, will be made a continental charge."

And he adds. "You may have wondered that the lists of tithables, &c. have not been forwarded to our delegates, and perhaps, may be more surprised, when I tell you of a general disinclination in the people to forward their lists. I have not received them from more than three districts in the Colony."

CHAP.  
V.

✓ The want of salt was another grievance felt throughout Virginia with peculiar severity, as the Colonists and their slaves chiefly lived on salted provisions, generally laid up about this time. Well acquainted with the importance of that article to the Province, the Commanders of British men of war, and of the Piratical vessels fitted out by Dunmore, rigorously intercepted its importation. Three thousand six hundred bushels of it, however, seized by the Colonial cruizers at Hampton, were distributed among the different counties—a seasonable, though transient and inadequate relief!

Want of salt  
severely felt

Such difficulties, and such hardships were, however, feeble and insignificant. They might be removed or endured. Indeed, they soon yielded to the ardor, perseverance and fortitude, with which the transcendant objects in view were calculated to animate the bosoms of an injured and generous people.

The state of the Colony evidently required further means of defence. Consequently, in addition to the two regiments, already in service, the Convention ordered the raising of seven more,\* and, though the committee of safety, instructed their representatives in the General Congress to use their best endeavours and utmost influence to procure the whole to be supported at the Continental expence. This, however, could be obtained for six regiments only. It was, at first, supposed that the intention of Congress was to pass by the two former regiments, and to take six of the new ones into Continental pay. This created some alarm and jealousy in the ancient Provincial officers, as it had a tendency to degrade their commissions, by giving to Continental officers of equal rank, but of later date, the precedence over them. To obviate the confusion threatened by this circumstance, the Convention earnestly recommended it to Congress, to allow the two existing regiments to stand first in the arrange-

Colonial  
forces in-  
creased.

January 12.

\* The following Field Officers to these additional Regiments, were at the same time appointed:

<i>Regiments.</i>	<i>Colonels.</i>	<i>Lieutenant-Colonels.</i>	<i>Majors.</i>
Third,	Hugh Mercer,	Geo. Weedon,	Thomas Marshall.
Fourth,	Adam Stephens,	Isaac Reade,	R. Lawson.
Fifth,	William Peachy,	William Crawford,	J. Parker.
Sixth,	Mordecai Buckner,	Thomas Elliott,	I. Hendricks.
Seventh,	Wm. Dangerfield,	Alex. M'Clenahan,	Wm. Nelson.
Eighth,	Peter Muhlenburg,	A. Bowman,	S. Helvinstone.
Ninth,	Thomas Flening,	Geo. Mathews,	M. Donaven.



## CHAP.

## V.

Patrick  
Henry re-  
signs.

ment. A list of the field officers, as they stood recommended, was at the same time transmitted to that body. The committee of safety afterwards received the commissions wholly filled up for the field-officers, in the order adopted by the Convention, beginning with Colonel Henry, and ending with Colonel Buckner. Colonel Henry was accordingly offered his commission, but he declined accepting it, and without assigning any reasons, retired from military service.

Efferves-  
cence caus-  
ed by this  
resignation.

Several causes were supposed to have produced on the part of Patrick Henry, this sudden and unexpected resolution. Among these, his friends specified a wish more efficiently to serve the common cause, in a career better adapted to the full display of genius and eloquence; the apparent slight of Congress in the first stage of the late appointments; and, especially, a secret and just impatience at a situation which, leaving to that eminent patriot little more than the empty splendour of a pompous title, rendered him the mere echo of authority, and prevented his martial talents from being exerted for his personal fame, and his country's good.\* Whatever motives might have induced his resignation, it produced some effervescence among the troops stationed at Williamsburg. The officers, in an affectionate address, which they presented to him on that occasion, warmly applauded "his spirited resentment of a most glaring indignity." As a number of them were preparing to escort him out of Williamsburg, after a splendid dinner given him at the Raleigh-tavern, the soldiery assembled in a tumultuous manner, and with loud clamours demanded their discharge, declaring their unwillingness to serve under any other Commander.†

Soon sub-  
sides.

Henry saw the propriety of checking this imprudent zeal. For that purpose, he prolonged his stay in Williamsburg; and, together with Colonel Christian and other influential officers, exerted himself in reconciling the troops to the present military arrangement. The warmth of individual affection was soon absorbed by a more expansive and more powerful sentiment, the love of Country: and the hopes which the disaffected might have conceived from this unguarded manifestation of discontent, vanished with their cause.

---

\* Colonel Meredith, in certain manuscript documents, says, that he heard P. Henry assign as the cause of his resignation, his disagreement with Colonel Woodford, and other officers. Co-operating motives appear to have induced that step.

† This took place at the close of Feb. but our narrative cannot be disjointed, so as to follow a rigorous chronological order. This remark may be applied to other parts of this History.

## CHAPTER VI.

*Resolutions of the Convention respecting Norfolk—That place is totally destroyed, and its site abandoned—Horse stations his troops at Kemp's, at the Great Bridge, and at Suffolk—State of affairs in North-Carolina—Opposition of Governor Martin to the popular measures—He retires to Fort Johnson, and afterwards on board the Cruizers—Fort Johnson is burnt by Colonel Ash—Martin's Proclamation—How received—Other hostile practices of Governor Martin—McDonald erects the royal standard at Cross Creek—Makes proposals to Moore—Who temporizes from stratagem—And finally rejects them—Retreat of McDonald—Affair at Moore-Creek—Dunmore's letter to Corbin—Communicated by him to the Committee of Safety—His interview with Dunmore—Proves fruitless.*

AFTER the conflagration of Norfolk, sharp skirmishes continued to take place between the Colonials, and the British forces, frequently aided by the dissaffected. In those occasional conflicts, the Patriots lost some men, but destroyed more of the enemy. The almost entire ruin of the town had imparted additional horrors to the asperity of an inclement season. The present station of the troops was uncomfortable in the extreme: it would have been found so even by veterans inured to all the severities and hardships of unmitigated warfare. Accordingly, on the 15th of January, the Convention passed the following resolutions:

January 15.

“ *Resolved*. That the town of Norfolk ought to be evacuated; and it is recommended to the commanding officer to remove the troops as soon as he shall find it necessary or prudent so to do, and take post at Kemps-Landing, the Great-Bridge, and such other places as he and his council of field officers shall judge most proper for the protection of the inhabitants in that part of the country, and the general good of the country; subject, however, to such alterations as the committee of safety may, in future, think proper to make; but that, previous to such evacuation, he cause the mills and intrenchments to be destroyed.”

“ *Resolved*. That it be recommended to such of the inhabitants of the counties of Norfolk and Princess-Anne as may be exposed to the attacks of the enemy, to remove themselves and their effects, and that the poorer sort be assisted in their removal by the public.”

Resolutions  
of the Con-  
vention res-  
pecting  
Norfolk.

CHAP.  
VI.

A resolution for demolishing the remaining buildings in the Town and suburbs, was, on the same day, proposed, but rejected. On the day following, however, the expediency of the measure was so forcibly urged by its advocates, that the Convention finally sanctioned it by the annexed resolution, humanely softening its inherent rigor by all the means which benevolence could suggest.\*

January 16.

*Resolved*, That the commanding officer of the troops  
“ at Norfolk, before he evacuates the said Town, agreeable  
“ to the resolution of yesterday, do cause proper persons  
“ to take a list of the houses remaining in Norfolk and its  
“ suburbs, since that Town was set on fire by our ene-  
“ mies, and to ascertain whose property they are, and  
“ also, to estimate their respective values; that he give  
“ notice to the inhabitants to remove with their effects;  
“ and give them such assistance in their removal as he  
“ may be able to afford; and, when the inhabitants are

\* As this is a subject upon which much has been said and written, we deem it our duty to lay before the reader, such parts of our manuscript documents as relate to it.

John Page, in a letter to Woodford, dated Williamsburg, January 2, 1776, says among other things:

“ I think your reasons for abandoning Norfolk are good, unless you had a large body of troops at Portsmouth, a stronger guard at Kemp’s, and a certain and better supply of provisions at Norfolk; but I think it would be better not to destroy the Town, for it is possible that matters may be accommodated in a short time, and, in that case, we shall have done ourselves a great injury to no purpose, and shall be laughed at by our enemies. It is true Norfolk may afford comfortable quarters to our enemies, but, then, destroying the houses will not prevent their repairing them, and building barracks, and we cannot prevent their keeping the port. Let them take the houses, and let us confine them there, and cut off all communication between them and the rest of the country. It may be wise to draw their attention to so worthless a part of our country; it may be the means of saving some more valuable place. If our enemies oblige us to burn Norfolk, may they not oblige us to burn Portsmouth, Hampton and York?”

In a letter addressed to Woodford also, and dated Williamsburg, January 16, 1776, Edmund Pendleton expresses himself thus:

“ While the Town was entire, I could not think it right for you to abandon it, as it was too shocking to think of our making a conflagration of our own Town, though too much the property of our enemies; but after Lord Dunmore had done that horrid work, fit only for him, I saw no reason for your stay; and yet a determination has been put off from time to time by our slow moving body, till yesterday, when a resolution passed, that you should evacuate as soon as it was judged necessary or prudent by a Council of Field Officers. A resolution for demolishing the remaining buildings in Town and suburbs was rejected, but I am inclined to think will pass to-day, as I do not see the propriety of leaving such comfortable lodgings to our enemy.”

Older letters before us, but from characters less influential and conspicuous, express the same reluctance for either the entire or partial destruction of that unhappy Town. It appears, then, that the motives of the Convention, for passing the present resolution, if founded in error, were, however, pure from all alloy of political rancour. Unwilling to suppress any circumstance known to us, we must add that, in looking over the Journal of the House of Delegates, which met in October, 1776, we observe a petition from the Mayor, Aldermen, &c. of Norfolk, in which the petitioners declare themselves ready to prove that “the greatest part of the Town, at the first conflagration, was wantonly destroyed by the Provincial troops.”



“ removed, that he cause all such houses to be demolish-  
 “ ed, as, in his opinion, may be useful to our enemies.”

In consequence of these directions, on the 6th day of February, Howe abandoned Norfolk, or rather the scite on which Norfolk had stood; for scarcely any vestige of that ill-fated Town was now to be seen. After removing the inhabitants, the remaining edifices had been destroyed; and the mournful silence of gloomy depopulation now reigned, where the gay, animating bustle of an active, emulous crowd had so lately prevailed. Of this evacuation, the gallant Carolinian gives a minute and interesting account, in a letter dated Great-Bridge, February 9, 1776, and addressed to his friend Woodford, who, having availed himself of the furlough granted him by the Convention, now enjoyed a transient respite from the toils and dangers of war, in the bosom of a beloved and virtuous family, in Caroline county. “ We have removed from Norfolk,” writes the gay warrior, “ thank God for that ! It is entirely destroyed ; thank God for that also ! And we shall soon, I hope, be in more comfortable quarters, when I shall be equally pious and equally grateful for that likewise !—Our enemies (except two six pounders) did not attempt to molest us either in destroying the remains of the Town, or in our retreat, but remained patient spectators of the whole scene. I expected they would be making excursions the next day, and sent Major Ruffin with a strong party, to interrupt them. They had collected a parcel of Sheep, which we took ; they stood a small brush, lost five men, among whom the notorious Mr. N——, who was shot through the head. We made eight prisoners, the infamous and wickedly industrious Mr. C—— one of them ; and we hear they had many wounded. Providence most graciously and remarkably continuing to protect us, ordained that we should not lose one man, or have one wounded, although they returned our fire, and gave our people beside a smart cannonade. I send another party to-morrow ; they shall have *no rest for the sole of their feet*. We were within an inch of taking Captain Squire, and Lieut. Wright, as the country-people inform us. We got our old friend, Mr. W——, who was in the Town, among the enemy, with no other intention, *to be sure*, than to pick up nails. He is, however, in close custody. Major Eppes is stationed at Kemp’s, with three hundred men ; Major Marshall will remain at Great-Bridge with three hundred more ; and where I shall be, I have not yet absolutely determined, though I join you in thinking, it should be about Suffolk. The tenders have been up to Major Cooper’s ; they burnt his barn, took Guttridge’s vessel, &c. &c.”

## CHAP. VI.

February 6.

That place is totally destroyed, and its scite abandoned.

Howe stations his troops.

At Kemp’s.  
At Great-Bridge.

And at Suffolk.

## CHAP.

## VI.

February 13

Suffolk was, in effect, the place where Colonel Howe ultimately determined to station the residue of the troops under his command. He arrived there on the 13th of February, with 644 men, of whom about 514 fit for duty; the rest enfeebled by sickness or fatigue, and incapable to act. To Suffolk numbers of houseless and distressed fugitives from Norfolk had already resorted; humanity and hospitality had thrown their doors open to receive those unfortunate wanderers: every building was crowded with them; to procure lodgings for the troops was, therefore, attended with immense difficulty. A scarcity of provisions was another necessary result of this extraordinary influx of adventitious population. Patriotism triumphed over all those inconveniences; and in the consciousness of being engaged in the support of a just and noble cause, every one forgot his ease, his comfort, his safety, to think only of his country's invaded rights, and of her awful situation, and sacred call. In order to establish a communication between Suffolk and Kemps, a party was stationed at Brittle's, and another at Sleepy-hole. A report that the enemy was intrenching himself below Portsmouth, caused Major Rufin to be sent down, for the purpose of ascertaining the truth. If any hostile post had really been formed at that place, it was contemplated to break it up; but as the ministerialists were found to be intrenched to the number of about 500, under cover of the ships, the design was for the present relinquished, as fraught with too many dangers, without any commensurate benefits.

State of affairs in N. Carolina.

While the brave and patriotic Howe was thus actively employed in promoting the best interests of Virginia, orders reached him to set out for his native Colony, to oppose the Highlanders and Regulators, two classes of citizens equally disaffected and formidable. At the very moment, however, that he was leaving Suffolk, in obedience to those orders, he was countermanded to stay, for the purpose of marching against General Clinton, who had just arrived in Hampton Roads with an alarming force, and whose debarkation at some favorable point was hourly expected, his real destination not being then known.

The mention of this incident naturally introduces a survey of the collateral and simultaneous transactions in the neighbouring province of North Carolina.

If Virginia was nobly zealous, and gloriously successful in advancing by her energy the triumph of the popular cause, North Carolina displayed an ardour no less commendable, and equally fortunate. Governor Martin had evinced an early and decided hostility to the measures of the people; in resisting ministerial encroachments. On the 4th of April, 1775, in a lofty governmental strain, he had charged the General Assembly of the Colony not to appoint Delegates to the general Congress at Philadelphia, alledging

Opposition of Governor Martin to the popular measures.

CHAP.  
VI.

that such an appointment would be highly offensive to the King; earnestly calling upon them, at the same time, "to oppose a meeting of Delegates, whom the people had been invited to choose, and who were to assemble at that very time and place, in the face of the Legislature." The answer of the General Assembly was firm, dignified, and worthy of Freemen. It forcibly and eloquently repelled the malevolent insinuations of the Governor, and openly counteracted his oppressive designs. Far from agreeing with him in bestowing on the Convention now held at Newbern, the injurious appellation of an illegal meeting, they recognized in the members of that body the respectable representatives of the people, appointed for a special and important purpose, to accomplish which, they must be independent from the frequent and capricious prorogations wantonly exercised in regard to the general Assembly themselves. Subsequent occurrences of a complexion no less inauspicious contributed to widen the breach between the Governor and the People. Trusting for the support of his authority, in the affection of the back settlers, chiefly composed of Scotch Highland Emigrants, warmly and obstinately attached to the Royal Government, he had commenced to fortify his palace, and contemplated an immediate appeal to arms; but before his plan could be effected, the people took the alarm, seized upon his artillery and ammunition, and compelled him to seek personal safety in a precipitate retreat to fort Johnson on Cape Fear river. Nor was this all. His continued efforts to foment a civil war; his avowed design of encouraging the slaves to revolt, if all other means to maintain the King's Government should fail; his hostile and dangerous letters to the ministry, and to General Gage, replete with falsities and misrepresentations of the Colony, induced the Newbern Committee to declare him an enemy to American Liberty, and to the rights and blessings of a free people, and utterly unworthy of their confidence.

He retires  
to Fort  
Johnson

It soon became evident that Fort Johnson was preparing for the reception of an additional force, upon which a patriotic assemblage collected at Wilmington, under Colonel Ash, with the professed intention of removing the King's artillery from the Fort, in order to preserve and secure it for the use of His Majesty. This contemplated removal was, however, prevented by the vigilant activity of the Governor, who himself retired on board the King's Sloop, the *Cruizer*. In the course of the succeeding night, Ash entered the Fort, and set fire to the houses and buildings within it, that had been evacuated and disarmed. The next day witnessed the entire destruction of what the flames had spared; and soon after the Committee resolved "that no person or persons whatever should have any correspondence with the Governor, on pain of being deemed

And afterwards on  
board the  
Cruizer.  
Fort Johnson is burnt  
by Colonel  
Ash.



**CHAP. VI.** enemies to the Liberties of America, and dealt with accordingly.

Martin's  
Proclamation.  
How received.

The publication of these proceedings and resolves, drew forth from Martin a proclamation of unusual length, or rather a minute and distorted narrative, with inflammatory comments. This the Provincial Congress, assembled at Hillsborough, unanimously pronounced to be a false, scandalous, scurrilous, malicious, and seditious libel, and ordered it to be burnt by the hands of the common Executioner. That this warmth originated in a sense of individual wrongs, and in the personal odium which the Governor had drawn upon himself, clearly appears from the moderation which the same body manifested on two other occasions. A plan of confederation having been laid before them, they expressed in the form of a resolution their deliberate and mature belief that "the plan of general confederation was not at present eligible, and that the existing association ought to be further relied on for bringing a reconciliation with the parent state, and a further confederacy ought only to be adopted in case of the last extremity." At a subsequent period, in an address to the inhabitants of the British Empire, proposed by Mr. Hooper, and unanimously adopted, they seemed anxious to ward off the imputation of aspiring to independence by the following expressions :

"We again declare, and we invoke that Almighty Being, who searches the recesses of the human heart, and knows our most secret intentions, that it is our most earnest wish and prayer to be restored, with the other united Colonies to the state in which we and they were placed before the year 1763, disposed to glance over any regulations which Britain had made previous to this, and which seem to be injurious and oppressive to these colonies, hoping that, at some future day, she will benignly interpose, and remove from us every cause of complaint."

Other hostile practices of Governor Martin.

The above occurrences which took place in the course of 1775, did not entirely prostrate the hopes of the Governor. Along the Western frontiers, and in other parts of the Province, were scattered a disorderly and restless set of men, called *Regulators*, from their attempt, in 1770, to stop the administration of justice, or, at least, to controul its forms. Their efforts had then been defeated, but they still retained the same wild and lawless spirit, and now aimed at the Colonial system the deadly blow which they had not been able to inflict on the Royal Government. The Province also contained many Scotch settlers, who had exchanged their mountains for a more genial climate, without being able to renounce those early partialities, attachments, and prejudices, among which a blind veneration for royal authority and its concomitants, was not the least influential. With both these classes of inhabitants, Martin continued

CHAP.  
VI.

to keep up a correspondence. By their means, he organized a plan of insurrection, issued Colonel's commissions for this purpose, and ordered such men as should take up arms to repair to the royal standard at Brunswick, before the 15th of February, 1776, promising that they should be then and there supported by 5000 regulars.

In effect, intelligence had reached him that General Clinton would, about that time, arrive at Cape Fear, with a small detachment, and that, early in the year, Sir Peter Parker, and Lord Cornwallis were to sail from Ireland for the southern Colonies, probably for North Carolina, with a squadron and a considerable body of troops. By the co-operation of those united forces, Martin flattered himself speedily to effect the reduction of the Colony. He nominated one Macdonald commander in chief of the royal party. Macdonald, bold, adventurous, and impatient to act, erected the royal standard at Cross-Creek, early in February, issued a proclamation prepared by the Governor for the occasion, and soon counted 1500 men, ready to march wherever he might choose to lead them. To form a junction with Lord Wm. Campbell, and General Clinton who had now reached Cape Fear, and, with them and the Governor, to penetrate the interior of the Colony, and awe the inhabitants into unconditional submission, was the plan of the Loyalists. This scheme, however, was defeated by the prudence and activity of the patriotic leaders. No sooner was Brigadier General James Moore apprized of the first movements of the disaffected, than he proceeded with his own regiment, five pieces of artillery, and part of the Bladen militia, to take possession of an important post, called Rock-fish Bridge, at the distance of seven miles only from the station occupied by the Loyalists. As his numbers were inferior to theirs, he resolved to intrench and fortify that pass, and to wait for reinforcements. These hourly arrived from different quarters, and on the 19th, his force amounted to about 1100 men. Macdonald now advanced, at the head of his army, within four miles of the Patriots, and by a flag of truce transmitted to Moore the Governor's proclamation, with a manifesto and a letter from himself, inviting him to join the King's standard, and containing the following threat: "I have thought proper to intimate to you that, in case you do not, by 12 o'clock, to-morrow, join the Royal standard, I must certainly consider you and your men as enemies, and take the necessary steps for the support of legal authority."

Moore was anxious to postpone a decisive answer, until the Colonial forces, then on their march to join him, should be so concentrated as to render success infallible. He, therefore, alledged the necessity of a conference with other Colonial officers, high in authority, previously to his returning a final communication on so momentous a sub-

Macdonald  
erects the  
royal stand-  
ard at Cross-  
Creek.

February 9.

February 15

Makes pro-  
posals to  
Moore.

Who tem-  
porises from  
stratagem  
and finally  
rejects them

## CHAP.

## VI.

ject ; and when he thought himself able to attack Macdonald with advantage, and even to cut off his retreat, he informed him that “ both he and the patriotic officers with whom he had consulted, considered themselves engaged in a cause the most glorious and honorable in the world, for the defence of the liberties of mankind, and in support of which they were alike determined to hazard every thing dear and valuable.” He then offered some remarks on the ingratitude of the Highlanders for their favorable reception in the Colony ; and concluded with these words : “ Desirous of avoiding the effusion of human blood, I have thought proper to send you a copy of the test, recommended by the continental Congress, which if you and your men will yet subscribe, we are willing to receive you as friends and country-men. Should this offer be rejected, I shall consider you all as enemies of the constitutional liberties of America, and treat you accordingly.”

To this Macdonald replied in a haughty and indignant tone, repelling with scorn the charge of ingratitude made against the Scotch Emigrants, expatiating with abhorrence on the sentiments of revolt, hostility and treason, to the King, which he ascribed to his opponents, and declaring it his duty to conquer, if he could not reclaim, all those who might be hardy enough to take up arms against the best of masters and of monarchs.

Retreat of  
Macdonald.  
February 21

An immediate engagement was, therefore, expected. On the 21st, however, Moore discovered that, during the two preceding nights, Macdonald, doubtless, apprehensive of being surrounded, had crossed the North-West river at Campbell Town, with the whole of his army, sunk and destroyed all the boats, and that he was now rapidly following the most direct route to Negroe-head point. Measures were speedily adopted to obstruct, harass, and distress them in their march, and the pursuit was marked with no

Affair at  
Moore  
Creek.

February 27

less activity and skill than the retreat. On the 26th, Col. Lillington, who had the preceding day, taken his stand at Moore's creek Bridge, was joined by Colonel Castell. A small breast-work was hastily raised, and the Bridge partly destroyed. The next morning, at break of day, an alarm gun was fired ; immediately after which, the Loyalists, headed by Capt. Macleod, in consequence of Macdonald's indisposition, with great spirit and impetuosity, rushed on to attack the Colonials. They now were within thirty paces of the breast-work and artillery of the Patriots, when a tremendous fire opened upon them. Macleod, and several officers and men immediately fell. In a few minutes, the whole of their army was put to flight : they abandoned their sick General, who was, the next day, taken by the Provincials—of the insurgents about 70 were either killed or made prisoners ; the Patriots had only two men wounded, one of whom died, and the other survived. A



CHAP.  
VI.

considerable quantity of arms, ammunition, and other military stores, became the property of the conquerors, and most of the fugitives were disarmed and secured. Thus was happily terminated a dangerous and menacing insurrection. This victory justly diffused through North-Carolina and her sister-colonies exultation and confidence. It crushed one of the heads of the hydra of opposition; and if it did not entirely neutralize, it, at least, retarded the operations meditated against the colony, and afforded time to prepare for the burst of the impending storm.

In the speech with which the King of England met his Parliament, on the 28th of October, 1775, among other measures contemplated in relation to America, he mentioned the following:

Dunmore's  
letter to  
Corbin.

"When the unhappy and deluded multitude against whom this force will be directed, (*an increased naval and military force destined against the Colonies*) shall become sensible of their error, I shall be ready to receive the misled with tenderness and mercy: and in order to prevent the inconveniencies which may arise from the great distance of their situation, and to remove, as soon as possible, the calamities which they suffer. I shall give authority to certain persons upon the spot to grant general or particular pardons and indemnities, in such a manner, and to such persons as they shall think fit, and to receive the submission of any Province or Colony which shall be disposed to return to its allegiance. It may also be proper to authorize persons so commissioned, to restore such Province or Colony, so returning to its allegiance, to the free exercise of its trade and commerce, and to the same protection and security, as if such Province or Colony, had never revolted."

This furnished Dunmore with the opportunity of an attempt, either real or pretended, towards a reconciliation between Virginia and the parent State. On the 22nd of January, 1776, he addressed, from the Ship *Dunmore*, in Elizabeth river, to the honorable Richard Corbin, a letter, in which, after complacently expatiating on the rectitude of his own intentions, and the benevolence of his own heart, and vaguely, but acrimoniously reflecting on the views, the motives, and conduct of the leading Patriots, he called on that gentleman, in the name of his God, his King and his Country, to "enforce by every exertion of his best advice and assistance, the sincere endeavours which the generous, the humane, the truly noble sentiments expressed in the part of his Majesty's speech just quoted, prompted him to make, to effect, by any means that should be thought most advisable, an honorable, permanent, speedy, and happy reconciliation between the Colony and the mother Country." On the 19th of February, Mr. Corbin laid the letter alluded to before the

Communicated by  
him to the  
Committee  
of safety.  
February 19

CHAP.  
VI.

committee of safety, requesting the opinion of that Body, in relation to the important object which Dunmore professed himself so anxious to promote. The Committee expressed, in answer, their ardent wishes for the reconciliation proposed, declaring themselves, at the same time neither authorized, nor inclined, to intermeddle in the mode of negotiation. "The Continental Congress, they said, have, in their last petition to the throne, besought his Majesty to point out some mode for such negotiation; and if the administration are disposed to heal this unnatural wound in the Empire, they will embrace that occasion (which probably will be the last) of accomplishing it. At all events, any other steps to be taken must proceed from the Representatives of the Continent. and not from us.— We shall, however, communicate the contents of Lord Dunmore's letter to the House of Burgesses, who meet, by adjournment, the first of March, and submit the matter to them, in case there should then be members enough to proceed to business, or as soon after as such a number can be convened. In the mean time, if his Lordship has it in his inclination and power to serve the Colony, and avoid making the breach still wider, it may be manifested by suspending hostilities against the inhabitants, until the ultimate intentions of his Majesty are known, respecting any negotiation." To this declaration, the Committee added assurances of unlimited confidence in the attachment of Mr. Corbin to the real interest of his country, and in the purity of the motives by which he was actuated. They entirely approved of his intention to proceed with a flag of truce on board the Dunmore, to hear what his Lordship might have to propose on the main subject of his letter. An interview took place between Dunmore and Corbin, just at the time when, having, on his way to Cape Fear, entered Hampton Roads, and visited the fugitive Governor, probably to concert with him future operations, General Clinton created the alarm which we have mentioned, as the cause of Colonel Howe's prolonged stay in Virginia. Much good humour, civility, and attention was manifested to Mr. Corbin by Dunmore, Clinton, and other British officers; but the hopes which the warmth of a benevolent and sanguine disposition had induced him to form and cherish, were totally frustrated. He read to Lord Dunmore the declaration of the Committee, in presence of General Clinton, who observed that, in his opinion, nothing asked by the Americans in a constitutional way, would be refused them; but that, if they relied upon the General Congress, they had nothing to expect from the Parliament. Upon this, Mr. Corbin proposed to Lord Dunmore, to issue a commission for holding an Assembly. This proposal was peremptorily rejected. Dunmore had another scheme in view: it was that the principal gentle-

His inter-  
view with  
Dunmore.

men in the Colony should sign certain propositions for an accommodation, which he would himself convey to England, and advocate with the ministry. This scheme, evidently tending to disunite the public mind, and, by a division of sentiment and measures, to lessen the force of resistance in the Colony, was too palpably insidious and hostile, to meet with the approbation and concurrence of any real friend to the rights and happiness of his country. It accordingly proved abortive; and conciliatory measures daily became less practicable. In an earlier part of the contest, the petitions of the American Colonists had firmly, but respectfully proclaimed, that from the King there was but one appeal. The admonition had been disregarded, and that appeal forced on them. They now had one truth more to inculcate on the deluded monarch; it was that, when Colonies have once drawn the sword, no retrograde step is to be looked for, and no alternative remains but that of everlasting avulsion from the Parent-Country, or utter annihilation. This awful alternative, for which too many motives already existed, the present measures of the ministers seemed to press, with increased violence, upon America.

CHAP.  
VII.

February 27

Proves  
fruitless.

## CHAPTER VII.

*THE Contest assumes a decisive character—Ministerial and Parliamentary Proceedings—And state of parties in England—Petitions in England against coercive measures—Military resignations—Difficulties attending enlistments—The ministers resolve on purchasing foreign troops—Are disappointed in Russia—And in Holland—Succeed in Germany—Petition of Congress rejected—King's speech—Debates upon it—Employment of foreign troops vehemently opposed—Finally carried—Warlike supplies enormous—Alarm of the Landholders—Removed by the duplicity of Ministers—Mr. Penn's examination—All conciliatory propositions are defeated—Bill for prohibiting all intercourse with the United Colonies—Four thousand troops voted by Ireland—A fleet sails from Cork—Is followed by other armaments—Commissioners for granting pardons—Expectations of the Ministers—Independence the necessary result of Ministerial Tyranny—The people of Virginia resolve upon a separation.*

WE have already travelled over two important periods of this memorable contest. First, we have seen imprudent and haughty ministers, in their rash attempt to oppress the Colonies by unconstitutional laws, kindle a wide and formidable blaze of discontent and opposition; secondly, we

The contest  
assumes a  
decisive  
character.



CHAP.  
VII.

---

have witnessed the defeat of those hopes," which a proud, but, at the same time, weak administration, derived from the supposed want of spirit, resources, and unanimity in America; and viewed the inefficiency of measures not stamped with a decided character, but fluctuating between concession and compulsion. We now come to a third epoch, that when the royalty of atoning for errors, by persisting in them, was fully displayed—when finding the Americans neither servilely passive, nor disunited, nor without means to resist oppression, the Government resolved upon employing not only the whole inherent and effective force of the British Empire, but even foreign mercenaries, to extinguish a flame which its own impolitic steps, and ill-conducted experiments had kindled, and which threatened extensive ruin, and incalculable injury to the rash and frantic incendiaries themselves. Here, a retrospective view of the Ministerial and Parliamentary proceedings, towards the close of 1775, becomes necessary.

Ministerial  
and Parlia-  
mentary  
proceedings  
and state of  
parties in  
England.

Hitherto, the Ministers had confidently hoped, and no less confidently asserted that the late acts of Parliament, and the troops already sent to America, would suffice to crush all opposition in the Colonies. They had flattered themselves that the Loyalists, encouraged by the presence of the military, and impelled both by their zeal in the cause of the King, and by their anxiety not to incur the vengeance denounced, in forms so terrific, against rebels and traitors, would rally in crowds round the royal standard, strike some bold and decisive blow, and speedily restore regular government. They had likewise indulged an expectation that, by the rigor shewn to New-England, the Southern Colonies would be deterred from embarking in her cause; and much reliance was placed on this anticipated division of the several Colonies, for the subjugation of them all. Nor were such delusions confined to the Ministers alone; their baneful influence extended to a considerable part of the nation. Soon, however, these empty hopes vanished; and the mist which had obscured or distorted every distant object, was suddenly dispelled. It could no longer be doubted that the King's troops, instead of marching as conquerors through the whole extent of the Colonies, were themselves cooped up within a narrow space, the precincts of a single town, whence they dared not sally forth; that the disturbances at first local and partial, now raged from one extremity of the Colonies to the other; that the Governors, so far from having been enabled, by the aid of the Loyalists, to restore the royal authority, had found it expedient to seek personal safety on board armed vessels; finally, that the Americans, in lieu of being intimidated, or so disposed to yield any of the contested points, hourly imbibed new courage, new vigor, new boldness, and new hopes. This afforded the opponents of the Ministers a

favorable opportunity to place in a glaring light their ignorance, their incapacity, their perverse obstinacy.—“men,” they exclaimed, “are the results of your wretched infatuation! Results which it was easy to foresee, and which we have long since and loudly announced! If you were determined not to listen to the remonstrances and petitions of the Colonists, you ought, then, to have provided a physical force sufficient to compel their obedience. You have done much to irritate, and nothing to subdue. Yours was the task to crush your adversaries, whilst off their guard, unsuspecting, defenceless: instead of which you have long before-hand warned them of your designs, doubtless, with an intention that they should have time to prepare for the struggle! With only part of your resources brought into action, and that part inconsiderable, you have rashly ventured upon decisive measures; in the eyes not only of America, but of the whole world, you have sullied the British name with the ignominy of defeat, without one single ray of glory to lighten this dark picture. Yet, Heaven be thanked for your misadventures, your disasters, your shame! They will, at least, teach you one great, awful, and salutary truth—that tyranny cannot be established in any part of the British Empire, so easily as you had imagined in the frenzy of your ambitious schemes. The mad experiments, tried in America, were, if successful, intended for India and herself. We may well rejoice at the resistance which has caused their failure. The noble example of our American brethren, will forever stand in the way of corrupt and aspiring Statesmen! It will forever ensure our rights, our liberties, our prosperity!” \*

To the charge of not having used sufficient activity, and displayed an adequate force, the Ministers answered that “mild proceedings best accorded with the laws, principles, and dispositions of Englishmen; that forbearance, and even affection had always characterized the conduct of the British government towards its subjects; that the administration, so often and so causelessly accused of tyrannical views, had, in the present case, studiously avoided a similar charge. What would have been said, they added, by those very men who now acrimoniously censure the indecision and laxity of our measures, had we, on the first news of the disturbances, sent large fleets and powerful armies to America, and carried fire and sword into the very heart of the Colonies? What would then have been their murmurs, if, notwithstanding our for-

\* We have aimed at giving in substance, not in expression, the arguments of both parties. See *Botta—Tomo secondo—Libro Sesto*. From that excellent author, we have largely borrowed in this place.

CHAP.  
VII.

bearance, they complain of arbitrary and despotic proceedings? Such clamours are to be disregarded. The inconsistency of those who raise them, sufficiently proves that they are actuated, not by love of country, but by ambition, not by a desire of justice, but by the rage of indiscriminate opposition. Surely, it was the duty of Ministers to grant full time for reflection and repentance; extreme remedies ought to be reserved for extreme cases. Long, indeed, has the mother Country submitted to the whims and caprices of her disobedient children; but this forbearance can have had no other effect than to convince them of her inclination to forgive. Her ability to punish, they know full well; and if they have not returned to the path of duty, their obstinate perseverance in error and guilt can be ascribed to no other cause than the calumnious vociferations of our opponents. It is by such men that they are deceived, misled, inflamed, and armed against their legitimate Sovereign. Soon, however, the activity and energy of government in displaying its means of compulsion, will shew that Great Britain possesses both the power and the will to maintain her rights, her interests, her dignity. After wasting so much magnanimity and indulgence on ingrateful and deluded Colonies, she is justifiable in proceeding towards them to the utmost extremities. No longer ought the Americans to be considered and treated as British subjects, but as implicable enemies. No rigor towards them can henceforth be wrong; and unconditional submission alone can satisfy us."

Such in substance, were the reasons alledged by the Ministers, in vindication of what they had done, and intended to do. A very obvious reflection deprived these reasons of all weight—The Ministers were the real authors of the unhappy disturbances which now convulsed the Empire.

Indeed, the dispute with America could not be viewed in England through a pure and calm medium. Rancorous passions, and clashing interests formed there a thick cloud of prejudice, owing to which, justice, reason, and truth must have lost their wonted refulgence. Accordingly, the violence and asperity of opposite sentiment which, at this time, pervaded the mother Country, fell little short of what the Colonies themselves exhibited. The angry feelings, the animosity of the Whigs and Tories in the days of Queen Anne, were now retraced, and perhaps, exceeded. A similar violence and correspondent obstinacy were manifested both by the partizans and the enemies of the American cause. "The Tories," one party observed, "are the authors of the public letters frequently addressed to the King and the Parliament, advising them to spread the havoc of war through the Continent of America. Their insidious and fatal misrepresentations fan the flame of discord. But we must look higher up for the source of their blind pre-



judices, and ambitious views. Both these are, in some measure, hereditary. We are to trace them up to those mischievous and hateful doctrines which followed into England the dynasty of the Stuarts, and finally caused their ruin. Yet, neither the calamities brought on their country by the absurd and servile creed of absolute hereditary right, and passive obedience, the subsequent downfall of the ill-fated family, in whose favour that creed was introduced, can operate in the minds of the Tories a salutary conviction, and deter their hearts from the pursuit of barbarous and tyrannical schemes. To their plans of aggrandizement and dominion, they are willing to sacrifice the liberties and the best interests of their Country. England, hitherto more fortunate than other European nations, had been blessed with a temperate and free government; of this blessing they are now endeavoring to deprive her, as if desirous to see the iron-sceptre of despotism equally extended over all Countries. With them, absolute dominion is the supreme good, and the dead calm of unresisting servitude, the happiest condition of society. They exult in revolutions, when the effect of these is to enslave mankind; but they deplore their evils with hypocritical sensibility, or exaggerate them with unblushing misrepresentations, whenever they tend to promote the liberties and the rights of their fellow-men. Riots and popular commotions are their everlasting theme; but they never speak of the multiplied abuses of arbitrary power, of devouring taxes, oppressive excise laws, unpunished outrages, unredressed injuries. They now oppose the American cause for this reason alone, that it interferes with their long and deep-laid schemes of consolidated tyranny at home. They hope that, after extirpating in America, every gem of freedom, and extinguishing there every spark of generous and manly spirit, their victorious Myrimidons will be able to fix a similar yoke on the submissive necks of Englishmen.—Such are their wishes, such their schemes; it is to accomplish them, and not to restore peace, tranquility and regular government in the Colonies, that they are now collecting all their strength, and nerving the arm of war. Let, then, their impious and fatal designs be prevented; let the career of their ambition be checked, whilst it is yet time; let Englishmen preserve entire the precious inheritance which they owe to the valor, spirit, and wisdom of their ancestors, and to the magnanimity of William the Third! To resist the tyrannical projects of an infatuated and ambitious faction, is to serve our Country's cause, and, perhaps, the cause of the reigning family, who cannot, without danger, shew themselves ingrateful to the Whigs, and depart from those sacred and fundamental principles, which have seated them on the British throne."

C AP. The Tories, with equal warmth, retorted on their adversaries the charge of cruelty, and abuse of power. They said, so far from the line of the Commonwealth, in questions of crimes produced, they said, by a spirit similar to that which now animated his friends of Liberty. Confiscation, illegal imprisonment, exile, murder: in short, every species of tyranny and barbarity, had marked the unhappy period, when the predecessors of the Whigs were in authority. And had not the restoration put an end to the destructive anarchy, which wasted in torrents, the best blood of the nation, and consumed its strength by unproductive and lamentable feuds, it was ever with the civil liberties, nay, with the political existence of Great Britain. She must have fallen a prey to external domination. What do the Tories ask? That in National concerns and disputes, there should be somewhere a supreme authority to regulate such concerns, and determine such disputes: and that authority resides, they think, in the King and Parliament, united. But to that authority the Whigs are unwilling to submit: they speak of we knew not what popular authority, which is lodged they say, in the body of the people, as if a tumultuous, ignorant and prejudiced and idle ought, and could determine on affairs which often puzzle and embarrass the wisest and and most experienced men in the nation. It is to avoid the evils, which would inevitably result from popular passion and crimes, that the King and the Parliament have been established. Theirs is the right, as well as the duty, to deliberate and decide on all matters of State. In the contest with America, the Ministers have not acted of themselves, and from their own animosity. The King and the Parliament have approved and sanctioned their measures: and this must suffice to justify them in the eyes of all the friends of order, and constitutional proceedings. But the real object of the opposition is to see England, as well as America, a prey to popular fury, and to all the excesses of unrestrained licentiousness, that they may freely indulge their avarice, their ambition, their resentments. The Whigs of the present day are the descendants, or, at least, the successors and representatives of those Republicans, who, in the last century, desolated the Kingdom. The name of liberty they loudly and incessantly proclaim, because they themselves aim at tyranny. Under pretence of the public safety, they lay aside, and even trample under foot, every established form, every legitimate authority: and practically exercise the most arbitrary power. Jealous without cause, ever ready to suspect, censure and condemn, they damp the zeal, and often paralyse the efforts of the true supporters of their country's rights, interests, and honors. But whatever may be the intrigues, the wishes, and the

bones of that restless and theoretical section, the votaries not of justice and rational liberty, but of confusion, violence, and anarchy, we are prepared to oppose them, to maintain order and tranquillity, to enforce the respect and submission due to the insulted majesty of the laws, and to exert every effect against the devoted Americans the measures solemnly adopted by the King and Parliament. The exigencies, the dangers of the Kingdom, the remembrance of the dreadful calamities yet to be engendered by parties feuds, will, we trust, render abstruse and vain, the schemes of these men; and it will be seen that the Tories are the friends, not the enemies of liberty, since liberty consists not in indulging and arming the people against their constitutional rulers; on every slight cause of complaint, but in faithfully obeying those fundamental statutes which the unanimous voice of the nation has established and consecrated, and which, in the union of King, Lords and Commons, exhibit a government worthy the admiration and the envy of the world."

To recapitulate all the general and specific charges and recriminations, which the heat of opposite sentiment produced at this period, were an endless task. We have already been too minute perhaps, on the subject of opinions. Facts are the soul of history.—To facts, therefore, let us return.

The temper of sentiment incessantly manifested itself by petitions to the Throne. Those in favour of coercive measures were generally signed by persons who possessed little or no share in the landed, commercial or political interest of the country. On the contrary, some of the most wealthy and most respectable Corporations in the Kingdom expressed their abhorrence from a resort to arms. They spoke, in loud and indignant terms, of the injuries and unnecessary effusion of civil blood, threatened by an unnatural contest; of the immense waste of National Treasure which must ensue, and of the fatal effects even of success, in a war equally ruinous to the conquerors and the conquered. They exhorted, they intreated, they supplicated the Monarch, to abandon projects fraught with abundant mischief, and promising no eventual advantage whatever.

The Earl of Elinburgh gave a striking and glorious example of political consistency. That Nobleman had originally opposed the whole system of measures against America. The corps to which he belonged was early ordered out against the Colonies. Unwilling to draw his sword in support of an administration whose energetic acts he had so warmly reprobated in his legislative capacity, he resigned his military commission. "Solemnly protesting," he observed, "the impossibility of reconciliation, on the present occasion, his attachment to his King, and his thirst

CHAP.  
VII.

Petitions in  
England against  
coercive measures.

Military resignations.



**CHAP. VII.** for professional fame, with the dictates of his conscience and his judgment." Public approbation and gratitude rewarded his candour and his firmness. Some other officers imitated his example

Difficulties attending enlistments.

These resignations, and the prevailing discontents, greatly checked the progress of enlistments. In vain the drum resounded, and the royal banner waved, through the most populous cities of England; in vain were extraordinary bounties offered; few individuals could be induced to become the tools of ministerial tyranny against their fellow subjects. This reluctance to serve in the American war extended equally to the Catholics and the Protestants. It was only in the northern parts of Great-Britain that the recruiting officers met with success: the poverty, and martial order of the Scotch Highlanders, as well as their blind veneration for the mandates of the Crown, favored their warlike preparations. But these levies were far from adequate to the plans of government. The Ministers, therefore, found themselves compelled to look abroad for auxiliaries; and British gold was now destined to purchase foreign armies for the effusion of British blood, and the prostration of British rights. Steps were taken near the Court of Petersburg, to obtain twenty thousand Russians, who were to be embarked for America, in the course of the ensuing Spring. Much was expected from these troops, whose discipline and valor had shone eminently conspicuous in the late war against the Turks. But the hopes which the Ministers had entertained from that quarter, were disappointed. The Russian Cabinet spurned the FOUL SCORN of hiring its troops to fight the battles of another Power—at least, it reserved the blood of its subjects for its own quarrels, and refused, despotic as it was, to degrade natives of Russia into foreign stipendiaries. Application was then made to the United Provinces of Holland. The States' General kept in their pay some Scotch regiments; these the British government, trusting to the ancient alliance, and common interests of the two countries, demanded, with a view to employ them in America.\* The States' General thought this too delicate and too important a matter for their own decision; accordingly they referred it to the respective Provincial States. Zeeland and Utrecht signified their assent; but Holland, and the rest of the Provinces determined upon the negative. To meddle with the quarrels of another nation, appeared to them inconsistent with the dignity of the Dutch republic; the warlike strength of the United Provinces was too inconsiderable, and their commerce too prosperous, thus rashly to involve them-

The Ministers resolve on purchasing foreign troops.

Are disappointed in Russia.

And in Holland.

\* A letter in his Majesty's own hand-writing, requested this disposal of the Scotch brigade in the Dutch service.

CHAP.  
VII.

selves in foreign broils ; if they should assist England against America, other States, sufficiently formidable and powerful, might aid America against England, in which case they necessarily would be considered and treated as a party in a disastrous war. To these considerations was added an indignant and resentful feeling at the maritime tyranny exercised by England, in her insulting search of Dutch vessels, and rapacious confiscation of Dutch property, under the specious pretence of Contraband. Besides, there was between the present situation of the Americans, and that of the Dutch under Philip II, something calculated to win and rivet the affections of the people in the United Provinces. In this sympathy, and in a secret wish to see the power of Great-Britain diminished, and her pride humbled, every class of citizens, sincerely concurred ; and all viewed with abhorrence a war in which even some tribes of savages had refused to engage.

In Germany, the efforts of the Ministers were more successful. They found several of its petty sovereigns no less eager to receive, than they themselves were, to give, the price of blood. A shameful traffic, and one that could take place only in the lowest state of social degradation ! The profession of arms may be dignified and ennobled by its objects ; it is sublime, it is worthy of the admiration and gratitude of mankind, when, exalting even vulgar men into heroes, it sends them, filled with a holy enthusiasm, and animated by the most endearing motives, to fight the battles of their country, or to bleed and die in some glorious cause, sacred to virtue and humanity, but when soldiers are thus converted into mere venal instruments of human butchery, those who sell, and those who purchase their murderous services, become, together with themselves, objects of universal disgust and execration. Accordingly, we will soon have occasion to remark the violent opposition manifested in England against this measure by the sound part of the Legislature, and of the nation.

On the first of September, 1775, Richard Penn and Arthur Lee delivered to Lord Dartmouth, one of the secretaries of state, a petition from the American Congress to the Throne. Lord Dartmouth haughtily and peremptorily told them that "no answer would be given." The petition contained this remarkable passage, *that his Majesty would be pleased to direct some mode by which the united applications of his faithful Colonists to the Crown, in pursuance of their Common Councils, might be improved into a permanent and happy reconciliation ; and that, in the mean time, measures might be taken for preventing the further destruction of the lives of his Majesty's subjects.* Had no other circumstances evinced the folly and tyrannical views of the Ministers, their positive refusal to hear a prayer breathing such a spirit of moderation, humanity

Succeeded in  
Germany.

Petition of  
Congress  
rejected.

CHAP. and respect for the Monarch, would alone have been sufficient to convince the Americans and the world, that wisdom and justice had now deserted the British Cabinet, and that force alone could decide the contest.

VII.

King's  
speech.

The address of the King to his Parliament, towards the close of the following month, part of which address has already been quoted, further established the attitude of an extended negative system. It announced the existence, in the Colonies, of revolt, hostility and rebellion, openly avowed; it charged the Americans with a design to enslave Great-Britain by vague and hypocritical protestations of attachment to the parent State, and of loyalty to the Throne, whilst preparing for a general insurrection; it stated an increase of naval and military force, for the purpose of putting a speedy end to the prevalent disorders; it spoke of offers of foreign assistance, of the employment of the Electoral troops, in the garrisons of Gibraltar and Port-Mahon, with a view to the augmentation of the national armies intended to act abroad; it proposed, as we have before mentioned, the eventual appointment of Commissioners to receive the submission of such Colonies as might return to their allegiance; and finally, after observing that the rebellious war had become more extensive and formidable, and was evidently carried on for the purpose of establishing an independent Empire, it said, in an impassioned appeal to the pride and ambition of Englishmen; "the object is too important, the spirit of the British nation too high, the resources with which God has blessed her too numerous, to give up so many Colonies, which she has planted with great industry, reared with great tenderness, encouraged with many commercial advantages, and protected and defended at much expense of blood and treasure!" A necessity for liberal and extensive supplies was alluded to, and a reliance expressed, in relation to these, on the affection of the Parliament for the Monarch, and on their resolution to maintain the just rights of the country, as a vigorous, animated and united support of the government could alone effect the desired restoration of order and tranquillity in the Colonies.

Debates upon it.

To this royal development no better answer could have been given than had fallen from Col. Barre, in debate, on a former occasion. "They planted by your care! No—your oppressions planted them in America. They fled from your tyranny, to a then uncultivated and inhospitable Country, where they exposed themselves to all the hardships to which human nature is liable, and, among others, to the cruelties of a savage foe, the most subtle, and I will take upon me to say, the most formidable of any people upon the face of God's earth; and yet, as noted by the friends of some English Liberty, they met all hardships with pleasure, comforted with their sufferings in their own Country, from the hands of those that should have been their



friends.—They nourished by your indulgence ! they grew by your neglect of them. As soon as you began to care about them, that care was exercised in sending persons to rule them in one Department and another, who were, perhaps the deputies of deputies to some members of this house, sent to spy out their liberties, to misrepresent their actions, and to prey upon them—men whose behaviour, on many occasions, has caused the blood of those sons of liberty to recoil within them ; men promoted to the highest seats of justice, some who, to my knowledge, were glad by going to a foreign country, to escape being brought to the bar of a court of justice in their own.—They protected by your arms ! They have nobly taken up arms in your defence ; have exerted a valour, amidst their constant and laborious industry, for the defence of a country, whose frontier was drenched in blood, while its interior parts yielded all its little savings to your emolument.”—When in the House of Commons, a ministerial echo to his Majesty’s speech was moved and seconded, Lord John Cavendish proposed an amendment, which occasioned a long and warm debate. Much eloquence fell in the course of this debate, from the lips of Lord Cavendish himself, General Conway, Colonel Barre, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Fox. But in vain were the united powers of reasoning, sentiment, and wit, brought into action against a corrupt and corrupting Ministry. After a whole night, consumed in attack and defence, Lord North, as usual, remained master of the field. The amendment moved by Lord Cavendish was, about 5 o’clock in the morning, rejected by 278 against 108, after which the address was carried without a division. This important discussion extorted from the Ministers an avowal that *they had been deceived*. The unanimous resistance of America had never been contemplated by them.

In the upper house, the address met with an opposition equally able and energetic. The Duke of Grafton displayed, in the debate which took place on this subject, a wonderful degree of candour and firmness. The result proved favorable to the Ministers ; there were 76 votes for the address, and 33 against it. A protest, signed by 19 Peers, was entered upon the occasion.

Among the measures embraced in the present Ministerial system, none was so obnoxious as the employment of foreign troops, under which denomination were comprehended the King’s electoral forces, and 17000 men, hired from the Land grave of Hesse Cassell, the Duke of Brunswick, and other German Princes. With regard to the former, the legality of admitting foreign troops into the Kingdom or its dependencies, without the express assent of Parliament ; was strongly contested by the opposition, in whose ideas on this head, a large majority of the people acquiesced, however they might differ respecting other

Employ-  
ment of fo-  
reign troops  
vehemently  
opposed.

CHAP.  
VII.

points connected with the American dispute. As to the latter, two very influential considerations militated against their introduction—national dignity, and national safety—to which the powerful, though subordinate, motive of economy was added. “English dignity, and English government, it was said while resting on their true basis, can never stand in need of foreign assistance for their preservation. Englishmen alone are adequate to the support of government, whenever the genuine objects of government are pursued. If we cannot preserve America without foreign aid, America belongs to foreigners, and not to us. But danger, as well as disgrace, attends these treaties for foreign mercenaries; for there is evident danger in drawing into a free country the insidious and venal aid of forces trained to the support of a barbarous despotism. The moment that a great army of Germans, or of any foreigners, shall enter the British territories, the liberties of the people are at an end; and the authority of the monarch himself will be more endangered by their assistance than it can be by any rebellion which can arise among his own subjects. And shall Ministers, because they are unable to prevail upon the natives of Great Britain to lend their hands to the sanguinary destruction of their brethren, be permitted to apply to the *German shambles*, and to hire foreign mercenaries for the work of blood? This foreign connection threatens the most fatal events. Hitherto the unhappy dispute has been confined to the children of the same parent: it is a domestic quarrel. Each side has depended solely on its own inherent forces. By associating German mercenaries to our feuds, we give America an example, the consequences of which will recoil on ourselves. She, too, will apply to strangers for assistance! And she will find many ready to espouse her cause, not from mercenary motives, but from inveterate hostility to England—from views of self aggrandizement—from a thirst of revenge for their former losses and humiliations. Such auxiliaries, instead of requiring subsidies, will furnish her with men and money.—And, independently of the disgrace and peril attendant on this treaty, the exorbitancy of its terms, would be sufficient to induce its rejection. The 17000 auxiliaries taken into British pay, will, including all contingencies, occasion an expence of no less than 1,500,000 *l.* within the course of one year.”

Finally carried.

Assailed with this vehemence, the Ministers sheltered themselves under the plea of necessity, which had now become the constant shield of their measures. The excesses of the Americans, and the emergencies of the state, justified, in their opinion, the employment of any forces, and on any terms. The question was carried in their favor by a large majority.

CHAP.  
VII

Other subjects excited considerable irritation, during that memorable Parliamentary session. The disclosure of the Secretary of war "that about one million of pounds sterling would be necessary to cover the extraordinary expenses of his department from the commencement of March the preceding year to the end of January, 1776," was heard with equal indignation and surprise. It appeared that no less than 100 la man had been expended on the garrison of Boston, within less than one year. Still the miseries and hardships complained of by that garrison, were scarcely credible. The motion for this supply was carried by a majority of 180 to 57.

Warlike  
supplies &  
normous.

The enormous expenditures already incurred, and those threatened by a plan which contemplated to augment the naval establishment of Sailors and Marines to 28,000 men, the land forces to 25,000. and the number of ships of war on the American station to 80, and proposed to raise the land-tax to four shillings in the pound. greatly alarmed the country gentlemen throughout the Kingdom. especially, when they understood that the idea of taxation in America was in a manner abandoned as inexpedient, or impracticable, and that the chief and sole aim of the Ministers now was to reduce the Colonies to constitutional dependence. Hitherto they had cheerfully contributed towards the extraordinary expenses of government, with a hope that their sacrifices would, at some future day, be compensated by the reaction which an American revenue must have upon the taxes at home. When that hope vanished, their zeal suddenly subsided; and had not the machiavelism of the administration assured them that the abandonment of Colonial taxation was merely a stratagem, and that, though apparently relinquished for the present, the scheme still subsisted in prospect, it is probable that the additional land-tax, which this Jesuitical explanation caused to be carried by a majority of four to one, would have been defeated.

Alarm of  
the Land  
Holders

Removed by  
the duplici-  
ty of Mi-  
nisters.

We have alluded to the Congressional petition presented by Richard Penn. and Arthur Lee, and related the repulsive observation of Lord Dartmouth, in respect to that petition. No further notice was taken of Mr. Penn, or the object of his mission, until the Duke of Richmond, some time in November, caused him to be examined before the House of Lords. In the course of this examination, the unanimity of the Americans, their respect for the Continental Congress, their local and general resources, their military and naval skill, their reliance on the effects of their last petition, which they considered as the olive branch of peace and reconciliation, the probability of their calling assistance, if refused a hearing, and their resolution never to yield to the British claim of taxation, though, in other respects, inclined to acknowledge the

Mr. Penn's  
examination



## CHAP. VII.

All conciliatory propositions are defeated.

Bill for prohibiting all intercourse with the United Colonies.

4,000 troops voted by Ireland.

A fleet sails from Cork.

sovereignty of the mother country, were ably and fully developed by Mr. Penn. After he had withdrawn, the Duke of Richmond moved "that the matter of the American petition afforded grounds for conciliation of the unhappy difference subsisting between the mother country and the Colonies, and that it was highly necessary that proper steps should be immediately taken for attaining so desirable an object." This motion, after a long and violent debate, was rejected by a division of 86 against 33, including proxies. That every avenue was now closed against a friendly understanding, was further evinced by the rejection of Mr. Burke's conciliatory bill, in November; the subsequent defeat of a similar attempt made by the Duke of Grafton, and the answer given by the King, about the same time, to the petition of the Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons of the City of London, who still persevered in pleading before the Throne, the cause of humanity and peace, from which the true interest of the British Empire was inseparable.

This stormy session presented another scene of turbulence, asperity, and discord, upon the introduction of a bill for prohibiting all intercourse with the thirteen United Colonies. This was the finishing stroke of ministerial impolicy, or rather madness. Enquiries into grievances, measures to redress them, were now totally laid aside. The Commissioners, whom this bill enabled the Crown to appoint, were to be invested simply with the power of granting pardons. Well might it be observed upon that occasion, as it actually was, "that the guardian genius of America had that day presided with full influence in the midst of the British councils, and inspired the measures now adopted." In effect, nothing could have a more efficient tendency to harmonize the efforts of the people in the Colonies, by uniting their minds in a most inflexible determination to cast off all dependence on the British government, and establish a free and independent government of their own; and this was truly and properly "a bill for carrying more effectually into execution the resolves of Congress."

The Irish Parliament also gave a proof of subserviency to ministerial views, by voting on the 25th of November, "that 4,000 out of the 12,000 troops, armed for the defence of Ireland, should be spared for his Majesty's service abroad, the same to be no charge to the Kingdom, after quitting it." The offer of 4,000 protestant troops to replace the native forces thus intended for America, these likewise to be no charge to Ireland, was, however, declined.

Parliamentary sanction having now crowned all the wishes of the Ministers, they proceeded to the execution of their plans. Sir Peter Parker, and Earl Cornwallis

were ordered to convoy from Cork to America a fleet of transports, with the *Acteon*, and *Thunder Bomb*, the whole armament amounting to 43 sail, and 2,500 troops. The impatience of the government was ill-served by casualties. The doubts and scruples of a timid Lord Lieutenant, prevented this fleet from sailing before the 13th of February, 1776; and, a few days after leaving port, it was dispersed by a tremendous storm. It reached Cape Fear, however; part on the 18th of April, and the rest on the 3rd of May, too late for the success of the plan organized by Governor Martin. At Cape-Fear, Sir P. Parker, and Earl Cornwallis found General Clinton. We will soon have occasion to notice their subsequent operations.

CHAP.  
VII.

Other armaments followed. Part of the Brunswick troops sail from Spithead, early in April, with Generals Burgoyne and Philips. Not long after, the first division of the Hessian mercenaries, sailed from St. Helen's under convoy of Commodore Hotham, who was followed by Admiral Howe, in the *Eagle* man of war.

& is followed by other armaments.

Letters patent under the great seal, had constituted Lord Howe and General Howe, to be his Majesty's Commissioners, for restoring peace to the Colonies in North America, and for granting pardons to such of his Majesty's subjects there, then in rebellion as should deserve the royal mercy.—The most moderate estimates carried to 40,000 effective men, both privates and officers, the forces intended to wreak ministerial vengeance on the Colonies.

Commissioners for granting pardons.

Nothing but rapid, brilliant, and full success was now anticipated by the administration. From the powers of Europe, they apprehended no hostilities. When closing the late Parliamentary session, his Majesty had communicated pacific assurances on their part. Under such circumstances, it appeared next to impossible that the Continental forces should withstand such a mass of British power; it was even imagined that, upon the first appearance of the English troops, every idea of further resistance would vanish. But should the American army, contrary to all probability, keep the field, badly armed, wretchedly disciplined, little inured to the hardships, the tumult, and the dangers of war, could they long resist the intrepidity, regular tactics, and unshaken patience of European veterans? First impressions are decisive in war, and first impressions necessarily must prove fatal to the Americans. To force, too, stratagem would be added. No art would be left untried to divide them. A few influential characters returning to their allegiance would bring multitudes in their rear: for, in popular resolutions, example is omnipotent. The Commissioners authorized to grant pardons, were highly respected, even in the Colonies; they were men of considerable hereditary distinc-

Expectations of the Ministers.

CHAP.  
VII.

tion—illustrious for their achievements both by sea and by land—they possessed zeal, skill, and policy—they would be on the theatre of action—wisely direct the operations of the army—and eagerly seizing on all favorable incidents, improve them into a final triumph!—Such were the thoughts, and such the hopes of the Ministers—erroneous, futile, and delusive!

Independence, the necessary result of ministerial tyranny.

America and the world might now be convinced that the two Houses in the British Parliament were little else than a cumbrous and expensive office of record, to register ministerial edicts; and this reflection rapidly matured in the Colonies the idea of a final separation from the mother country.\* This idea had occurred before to men of ener-

\* Various have been the attempts to fix with precision, the epoch, when the idea of Independence first originated. British writers have traced the conception of it so far back as the reduction of Canada, or, at least, the cession of that country by the French, in 1763. They ascribe the subsequent differences between the mother country and the Colonies, to a deeply laid scheme, the object of which was to furnish the people with causes of irritation, and finally to bring them to a separation from Great Britain. There is no good reason, however, for this opinion. It is evident enough that the measure resulted, not from any extensive, long-preconcerted plan; but from adventitious, progressive causes. It was the impact of ministerial folly and violence, that detached the Colonies from the body of which they made part—but, even then, powerful affinities continued to subsist, and these fragments of empire, still moving within the sphere of attraction of the Parent State, naturally gravitated towards it, though without any determined laws. When was the bold, sublime, and creative idea formed, to give to those detached, erratic fragments, a new projectile impulse; to teach them to assume in the political space, a station of their own, and to disdain revolving, as satellites, around a distant and smaller body? It is said that Christopher Gadsden of South Carolina, and both Samuel and John Adams, together with Hancock of Massachusetts, were, at a very early period of the contest, decidedly for Independence. We cannot accurately ascertain the birth of their opinions on this head; nor whether they were for *absolute and irrevocable* independence, previously to 1776. No historian is definite and precise in this respect; though all pay a just homage to the energy and ardent patriotism of those gentlemen.—Letters written by influential characters in Virginia, about the middle of 1775, and, at this moment, before us, mention the idea; but they seem rather to hold it out *in terrorum* to the ministers and their friends, and to view the measure in the light of an unwished for alternative, of a *last resort*, (see appendix, No. 12.) Subsequently to the infamous Proclamation of Lord Dunmore in November, 1775, the public newspapers of the Colony abound in similar hints. In Pinkney's Virginia Gazette for the 20th December, same year, we observe the following remarks, in a piece signed "A SOLDIER;"—"Our cruel enemies have forced us to pass the Rubicon; we have begun the noble work, and there is no retreating. The king of England has proclaimed us rebels. The sword is drawn; the scabbard must be thrown away; there is no medium between a glorious defence, and the most abject slavery. If we fail in our endeavors to repel the assaults of tyranny, we are to expect no mercy. The brave, but miserable Corsicans, may serve for an example of the unrestrained ravages of enraged despotism. On the other hand, the states of Holland supply an instance of happiness and glory, procured by a noble stand against absolute power. *We would not wish for the absolute independence of the latter, would our inveterate oppressors but listen to our just complaints; but, at all events, we are determined not to submit to a system of taxation, little inferior to the slavish thralldom, in which the subjects of the Turkish Sultan are held.*"



gy. genius, and influence ; but there is no just ground for believing that even to them the measure appeared expedient and desirable in the abstract ; they seem to have considered it as an awful alternative, as a matter of *last resort*. It is not that the encouraging degree of maturity already attained by the country, or the dignity and advantages of a distinct political existence, escaped their penetration ; nor were they strangers to the previous inducement, and inherent power of the United Colonies, to declare and assert a separate station ; but they had hitherto hoped for an honorable and, in every respect, satisfactory settlement of differences ; it was reserved for an infatuated and corrupt administration to force upon America, by accumulated wrongs, and avowed oppression, a reluctant, though irrevocable dissolution of those powerful, endearing ties which naturally connect the child with the parent.

Upon intelligence of the prohibitory bill and of the appointment of Commissioners for granting pardons, every one distinctly perceived that the Colonies must shortly be driven to unconditional submission, or to a declaration of independence. The former of these alternatives was universally viewed with scorn and indignation ; the latter, therefore, became the ultimate hope and refuge of the people. Accordingly, we find the important question of a separation from Great-Britain to have been, about this time, a subject of deep concern, and solemn deliberation, both public and private. Mr. Payne's celebrated pamphlet, under the title of *Common Sense*, by its popular, luminous, and forcible manner, as well as by its momentous substance, had excited much attention, and operated in the public mind a wonderful change. That impressive writer was assisted, in the Colony of Virginia, by many able collaborators. The news-papers of Virginia for March and April, present on this important subject various *Essays* remarkable for strength of argument, and beauty of expression. We select the following extract from a paper inserted in Purdie's Gazette, issued on the 19th of April.

“ To speak without figure, I will tell you plainly, Fellow-Citizens, your situation, and point out your interest and duty. You have already proceeded so far, that, were your cause less righteous than it is, you could not, in poli-

This certainly was a strong intimation of *eventual* independence. Purdie's Virginia Gazette, towards the close of 1775 and at the beginning of 1776, contains intimations of a like nature. In the numbers for March and April, we find *essays* on this subject, the sentiments and language of which are most strongly decided. *Common sense* and local essays of this sort, rapidly infused decision into the public mind, hitherto fluctuating and irresolute. But the mass of affinities that bound the Colonies to the parent state, was almost incalculable. Immense, indeed, must have been the reactive force that could overcome such an impulse. Tyranny supplied that force, in the abhorrence which it inspired !

CHAP.  
VII.

cy recede. You have overturned every form of the constitution, if such a defective patchwork fabrick as yours, can be called a constitution ; you have assumed the legislature into your hands ; you have raised troops ; you have waged war, and you have, in appearance, at least, expelled your Governor. In short, you have committed a multiplicity of acts, which a Prince less tyrannical, a Ministry less abandoned, and a nation less imperious than that of Great-Britain, might choose to construe into treason, and which, if fortune, or your own indecision should throw into their power, they will infallibly punish as such. If you succeed, all these things which you have done will redound to your honor ; but if you miscarry (which may Heaven and your own spirit avert !) the horrible slavery, which must be the lot of you and your children, will be represented in History, as scarcely adequate to the blackness and magnitude of your crimes. If any thing in human affairs is certain, it may be affirmed that success or miscarriage is at your own option. Decision ensures the former ; hesitation incurs the latter."

" You have an army, the soldiers and officers of which have displayed more valour, order, and discipline, and the Generals more ability, than the enemy, or you yourselves could possibly have expected. They have been crowned with most wonderful success. And are they now to be stopped in the career of their good fortune ? And are your liberties to be risked on the chance of a die, merely through complaisance to the fears, if not the treachery of the most despicable and worthless part of the community ? I speak not from passion or prejudice ; I appeal to your own sense and experience. Look about you. Who, what are these men sobbing and whining after their darling dependence, which they can neither understand themselves, nor do attempt to explain to others ? Are they not the very men who, from the very beginning, have either openly opposed, or thrown obstacles in the way of, every spirited measure of resistance ? In short, are they not men of suspected principles, of muddy, perplexed understanding, or of a timidity ridiculous to a Proverb ?"

The writer next proceeds to consider a " Declaration of Independence" as a sure means of obtaining from friendly European States, the warlike and other supplies so much wanted by the Province, to carry the impending war to a successful conclusion. " An intercourse with those States cannot, he observes, be properly and efficiently established, unless you declare yourselves a *free and independent people*. Whilst you remain in the predicament of *rebels*, they are, in decency, obliged to keep aloof ; but, when you can be considered as an independent state, the eternal rules of policy will point out to them the advantages and honour which must result from a close alliance with you. For

CHAP.  
VII.

Heaven's sake, why, wherefore do you hesitate? The pusillanimous mortals, who labour to raise spectres in your imaginations, similar to those which haunt their own, know very well that reconciliation and re-union with your butchers, are impossible. You may, indeed, be their slaves, but to be their brethren and fellow subjects, is out of the nature of things. Procrastination only prolongs the calamities of war. Every day's delay swells up the expense of America's blood and treasure. Will you, then, I repeatedly demand, throw away the lives of so many thousands of your most valuable citizens, plunge yourselves into an enormous debt, from which you can never be extricated; will you stake the liberties of yourselves and posterity, on hazard and fortune, merely in complacency to the fears of a few timid, or, perhaps, to the designs, of a few disaffected men? or will you, by a brave, spirited, and manly injunction on your servants in Congress, to declare you a *free and independent people*, bring the calamities of war to a shorter issue, and fix your liberties on a firm and durable foundation?"

These, and other arguments, derived from the justice, expediency, necessity, and practicability of independence rapidly diffused through the Colony that steady conviction, and generous spirit, before which all difficulties must ultimately vanish. Every one distinctly perceived that a measure thus bold and decisive could not add to existing calamities, or to impending dangers; that, on the contrary, it was pregnant with incalculable advantages for the present, and promised future splendour and prosperity.—Influenced by these weighty considerations, animated by this bright prospect, the people of Virginia now called for *independence* in a loud, and almost unanimous voice. Their sentiments on this point were made known to the Delegates for the next Convention, either by direct instructions, or through the medium of the newspapers, with a view that they should be speedily conveyed to the Continental Congress, upon whose decision a question of that magnitude must finally depend.

The people  
of Virginia  
resolve on  
a separation.



## CHAPTER VIII.

---

*Meeting of the Convention—Declaration of the Convention in favor of Independence—Excites universal joy—Military arrangements—Gen. Charles Lee is appointed to command in the South—Arrives at Williamsburg—His popularity—Measures against the Disaffected in the Lower Country—Orders issued to Colonel Woodford on this subject—And by him humanely executed—Active measures of Gen. Lee—Mitigation of the orders respecting Princess Anne and Norfolk Counties—Barron intercepts important dispatches from England—General Lee marches to North Carolina—Arrives at Newbern—Military measures in Virginia—Dunmore quits his station for Gevin's Island—Declaration of rights—Constitution—Mr Jeffersons preamble—Outlines of the Constitution—Constitutional clause respecting former grants by the Crown to adjacent Colonies—Appointments under the new Constitution—Adjournment of the Convention—Summary of their proceedings—General Lee goes to Charleston—The Briti shallack Sullivan's Island—and are repulsed—State of American affairs in the North.*

### CHAP. VIII.

---

May 6.  
Meeting of  
the Conven-  
tion:

THE Convention assembled at Williamsburg, on the 6th of May. The President, Edmund Pendleton, in a short address from the chair, observed to the members of that venerable body "that they were met at a time truly critical, when subjects of the most important and interesting nature required their serious attention; that the administration of justice, and almost all the powers of government had been suspended for nearly two years; and that it became them to reflect whether the country could longer sustain the great struggle it was making, in such a situation."

On the same day, forty-five members of the House of Burgesses, met at the Capitol in Williamsburg, in pursuance of their adjournment, in March preceding. As the Constitutional Legislature could not, when chosen, assemble but in conformity to a summons from the representative of the Crown; and as Lord Dunmore had refused, upon Mr. Corbin's suggestion, to issue a commission for convening and holding an Assembly, they declared it to be their opinion, that the people could not now be legally represented according to the ancient constitution which had been subverted by the King, Lords, and Commons of Great-Britain, and consequently dissolved; accordingly,

they unanimously dissolved themselves.—Thus was the tottering fabric of the royal government utterly demolished in Virginia. To substitute, in its stead, a structure of more elegant, and more solid form, was now the task of the Convention.

In effect, the people were by the prohibitory bill, and other acts of the British government, thrown out of British protection, and, of course, released from British allegiance, and restored to their natural rights—a situation scarcely foreseen by themselves, and to which we must refer the apparent anomalies which this period of our history will exhibit.

The explicit wishes of a majority of the people, and the obvious necessity of a close and indissoluble union of the several Colonies against the impending storm, as well as of a new government to preserve internal peace and order, produced, on the 15th of the same month, the following memorable declaration, and two important resolutions connected with it:

May 15.

“For as much as all the endeavours of the United Colonies, by the most decent representations and petitions to the King and Parliament of Great-Britain, to restore peace and security to America, under the British government, and a re-union with that people upon just and liberal terms, instead of a redress of grievances, have produced from an imperious and vindictive administration, increased insult, oppression, and a vigorous attempt to effect our total destruction. By a late act of Parliament all the Colonies are declared to be in rebellion, and out of the protection\* of the British Crown; our properties are subjected to confiscation; our people, when captivated, compelled to join in the murder and plunder of their relations and countrymen; and all former rapines and oppression of Americans declared legal and just; fleets and armies are raised, and the aid of foreign troops engaged to assist their destructive purposes. The King's representative in this Colony hath not only withheld the powers of government from operating for our safety, but, having retired on board an armed ship, is carrying on a piratical and savage war against us, tempting our slaves by every artifice to resort to him, and training and employing them against their masters. In this state of extreme danger, we have no alternative left, but abject submission to the will of those overbearing tyrants, or a total separation from the Crown and government of Great-Britain, uniting and exerting the strength of all America for defence, and

Declaration  
of the Con-  
vention, in  
favour of In-  
dependence.

\* We cannot sufficiently admire the providential folly of the British Legislature. They declared by this act the Colonies independent; for dependence was founded on protection. Remove the cause, and the effect ceases. *Quis Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.*

CHAP.  
VIII.

forming alliances with foreign powers for commerce and aid in war. Wherefore, appealing to the searcher of hearts for the sincerity of former declarations, expressing our desire to preserve the connexion with that nation; and that we are driven from that inclination by their wicked councils, and the eternal laws of self-preservation;”

“*Resolved unanimously*, That the Delegates appointed to represent this Colony in General Congress, be instructed to propose to that respectable body, to declare the *United Colonies, free and independent States*, absolved from all allegiance to, or dependence upon, the Crown or Parliament of Great-Britain; and that they give the assent of this Colony to such declaration, and to whatever measures may be thought proper and necessary by Congress, for forming foreign alliances, and a *confederation of the Colonies*, at such a time and in such manner as to them shall seem best; provided that the power of forming Governments for, and the regulations of the internal concerns of, each Colony, be left to the respective Colonial Legislatures.”

“*Resolved unanimously*, That a Committee be appointed to prepare a declaration of rights, and such a plan of Government as will be most likely to maintain peace and order in this Colony, and secure substantial and equal liberty to the people.”

Excites universal joy.

This decisive step was productive of incalculable benefit. It removed the doubts and uncertainties which still remained in some timid and wavering minds; and directed all the energies of the people towards a fixed and determinate object. Demonstrations of joy every where shewed that the measure was in perfect unison with the public feeling. At Williamsburg, military parades, discharges of artillery, civic dinners and toasts, general illuminations, and other signs of joy, evinced the pleasure which both the citizens and the troops felt at the final dissolution of every tie with a tyrannical parent. Whilst the *Union flag* of America proudly waved upon the Capitol, every bosom swelled with generous sentiments, and heroic confidence. Lurid and threatening as the political horizon of America appeared, no one gave way to gloomy fears and unmanly despondency. All relied on the justice and nobleness of the common cause; on the enthusiasm, harmony, and strength of United America; and, especially, on the assistance and favour of *him who rules the fate of nations*, smiles on the efforts of the virtuous and the brave, when struggling for his best gift, *Liberty*; and distracts the Councils, and paralyzes the arm of tyranny, hateful to God as well as to man.

On the very same day that the Convention was employed in issuing the above resolutions, by a remarkable coincidence, the Continental Congress, then sitting in Philadelphia, adopted the measure of “recommending to the respective assemblies and Conventions of the United Colonies,



where no Government sufficient to the exigencies of their affairs had been theretofore established to fix upon such Government, as should, in the opinion of the representatives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their Constituents, in particular, and America in general."

CHAP.  
VIII.

In the mean time, military preparations were not forgotten in Virginia. The army assumed a regular and systematic organization. Meritorious officers were promoted : among these, we observe Colonel Andrew Lewis, and Colonel Robert Howe, appointed Brigadier General by the Continental Congress. The gallantry and services of the latter, as well as the tribute of approbation and thanks paid to his zeal and skill by the Convention, we have already noticed. On the 4th of March, the Provincial Council of North-Carolina honoured him with a similar tribute—and to crown his fame, *he was on the 5th of May, excepted, by Sir Henry Clinton, from the benefit of the pardon which that General offered, in his Majesty's name, to all such Carolinians as should lay down their arms, and return to their duty, and to the blessings of a free Government, as established by law.*

Military arrangements.

The cloud of danger evidently hanging, at this portentous time, over every part of the United Colonies, induced the Continental Congress to appoint Major General Charles Lee to the command of the Southern department. His arrival at Head Quarters in Williamsburg, on the 29th of March, was hailed as the harbinger of victory. That extraordinary character was then encircled with a blaze of renown and popularity. The laurels of war and those of literature alike ornamented his brow. Trained from his infancy to the profession of arms; distinguished, at an early age, by brilliant exploits in Canada, Portugal, Poland, and Russia; and lately by his devotion to the United Colonies, whose cause he had frequently advocated in eloquent publications, and now zealously supported with the sword; having sacrificed to his ardent enthusiasm for liberty his native and social partialities, his fortune, and a splendid prospect of professional advancement in the cause of royalty, he possessed the esteem and admiration of all. Whilst viewing his rare and commanding qualities, all forgot that eccentricity of temper which, in no small degree, attended him, as it does often attend men of exalted genius. During his stay in Virginia, his attention, activity, and vigilance to augment and improve the forces already raised, to neutralize the malignant efforts of the disaffected, and even to rid of their presence the most exposed parts of the country, shone eminently conspicuous. Early in April, the Committee of safety issued, on his recommendation, the following order :

General Charles Lee is appointed to command in the South.

Arrives at Williamsburg.

His popularity.

Measures against the disaffected in the Lower Country.

AT WILLIAMSBURG, April 10, 1776.

The Committee, taking under their most serious consideration, a letter from Major-General Lee, urging the necessity of removing the inhabitants of Norfolk and Princess-Anne counties, from the neighbourhood of our enemy, together with several letters from the Secretary of State lately intercepted, and other papers; and having been repeatedly informed upon oath, by every person that has escaped from Lord Dunmore's ship, and the fleet at Norfolk, that there is a constant intercourse kept up between the inhabitants on the Norfolk side, who furnish the enemy with provisions, and give intelligence of all our measures, which conduct has likewise been frequently experienced and complained of by the officers at our posts in these counties. This Committee impressed by the foregoing and many other pregnant proofs, with a full conviction of the inimical disposition of many of the inhabitants in the neighbourhood of our enemy, and convinced that all others who may be well disposed, and really attached to the common cause must be exposed to the depredations of the enemy, *Do unanimously resolve and order*, That all the inhabitants of Norfolk and Princess-Anne county, at present residing between the enemy and our posts at Great-Bridge and Kemp's Landing, and in a direct line from Kemp's Landing to the Ocean, be immediately removed to some interior parts of the Colony, and that those who are unable to remove themselves be assisted by the public; and for the better effecting such removal, *It is further ordered*, That all the live stock of the said inhabitants, be immediately taken possession of by our army, and removed to a place of safety, for the use of the owners, and such part thereof, as the owners may be willing to part with, be purchased by the Commissioners for the use of the forces, except where it may happen to be the property of such as have already retired to, or may hereafter join Lord Dunmore.

This Committee considering the intelligence contained in the aforementioned letters from the Secretary of State, and reflecting on the uniform policy of the British court, and the measures lately adopted in North-Carolina, are fully convinced that our enemies are solely encouraged to make their wicked attempts upon such Colonies, wherein they can expect the best assistance, from persons disaffected to the American cause, and are of opinion that the most likely means of securing this Colony from such attempts, will be to remove all suspicious persons, beyond the influence of the enemy. *This Board, do therefore, order*, That all persons within the counties of Norfolk and

Princess-Anne, who have heretofore repaired to Lord Dunmore's standard, and taken the oath prescribed by him, who thereby may have a reliance on them to aid his measures, do immediately remove themselves to some interior part of this Colony, at least thirty miles from the enemy, and the better to enforce such removal; *It is further ordered*, That all the male slaves of such suspected persons, above the age of thirteen; and, also, the like slaves of the persons within the limits afore-described, be immediately taken into the custody and safe keeping of some officer at our posts in Norfolk and Princess-Anne, to be conveyed to some place of navigation, and to be returned to the owners after they shall have settled at some secure place, upon the further order of this Committee.

*Resolved*, That a sum of money, not exceeding one thousand pounds, be advanced to Willis Riddick, James Murdaugh and Andrew Meade, Gentlemen, or any two of them to be applied to the assistance of such poor persons, as in their opinion may not be able to remove themselves, and the said Willis Riddick, James Murdaugh and Andrew Meade, are hereby empowered and requested to make proper provision for these necessary purposes, and in general, to superintend this important business, and be assisting in the execution thereof, in the most humane manner the nature of the case will admit of—and it is earnestly recommended to all persons, who can provide habitations for such persons so removing, to give notice thereof in the Virginia Gazette, as speedily as possible.

JOHN PAGE, V. P.

*Attest,*

JOHN BECKLEY, Asst. Clk.

The subjoined instructions, connected with the above resolves, were, on the 20th of the same month, transmitted by the energetic Major General, to Col. Woodford, who had now returned to the army, and was stationed at Kemp's landing: Orders issued to Col. Woodford on this subject.

KEMP'S LANDING, April 29th, 1776.

You are to remain at this post, and take the command of all the troops in this District.

You are to put in execution the resolves of the Committee of safety, with all possible expedition, but with the humanity natural to your temper.

You are to remain in the command of this District, till you are relieved, or ordered away.

All those whom you shall discover carrying on any correspondence with the enemy, or with any person in the enemy's fleet, you are to consider as Traitors to their country, burn their houses, and convey the Traitors up, pinioned and handcuffed, to Williamsburg, with a written specification of their crimes,



CHAP.  
VIII.

---

The residents who are immediately in the neighbourhood of this post, need not be obliged instantly to remove ; but their male slaves, and live stock must be drove off with the rest.

CHARLES LEE, *Major General.*

To Col. WOODFORD.

Two lists were at the same time forwarded, the one of suspected persons, or rather, to use the General's words, manifested Tories—the other of manifested friends. The former had given their paroles to appear before Woodford on the ensuing Wednesday, and he was directed to proceed with them conformably to the orders of the Committee—Much, however, was left to his own good sense and discretion. The latter were to be treated with the consideration which their virtue deserved. The negroes were to be employed in the public service, until further orders. A failure to appear was to be considered as treason, and punished accordingly. The list of friends contained only 10 names ; that of suspected men 43, whose adult male negroes amounted to 61 ; a circumstance which affords an additional proof of the preponderating numbers of the disaffected in that part of the Colony.

And by him  
humanely  
executed.

Woodford hastened to execute those orders, softening their rigor as far as was consistent with the safety and interests of the country, and directing his men “to pay in every case, to the situation of the respective inhabitants, all possible humanity, decency, and complaisance.” The duty which had now devolved upon him was highly repugnant to his benign and magnanimous disposition ; but it was indispensable. The letters of his friends Edmund Pendleton, and Robert Howe, and of General Lee himself, shew that they sincerely pitied him for an employment, in itself harsh and painful, and which daily became more irksome and difficult, the Convention deeming rigid and vigorous measures expedient, under an impression that Howe's fleet and army, after quitting Boston, were bound for Virginia, and would begin their hostile operations in that section of the Colony. General Lee's invigorating care effected, or at least, promoted various other objects connected with the defence of the country. In order to enable himself to regulate his operations according to the internal force of the Colony, he required accurate returns from the officers of the army, and the Committees of the different counties. Aware that the present crisis demanded not merely a numerical, but an effective body of well-disposed, as well as brave troops, he directed all the Colonels not to allow the several recruiting officers of their regiments to enlist natives of Great-Britain or Ireland, unless they had been sometime residents in the country, had wives and children, or could bring strong and sufficient recommendations. Conscious that, particularly in Virginia,

Active mea-  
sures of  
Gen. Lee.

Circumstanced as it then was, an army without cavalry must be a very defective mass, and could not act with any tolerable degree of credit and success, he appealed to the patriotism of the young Gentlemen of the different counties, entreating them to form themselves into companies of Light Dragoons, whose organization he pointed out, and to lend a zealous and efficient aid in asserting the rights and dignity of their oppressed and insulted Country. His genius also vivified the germs of private and public industry and enterprize for manufacturing at home the warlike implements, which had now become so necessary. The depredations of Dunmore, and the motley force that co-operated with him, exciting irrepressible indignation throughout the Colony, plans were formed to annihilate at one blow his Lordship's fleet and army. For this purpose, naval and other preparations were entered upon with considerable vigour; and had not the tempest of war, moving onward to the South, called there the attention and efforts of the General, it is presumable that the contemplated attack would have been speedily made, and crowned with success.\*

The execution of the resolves of the Committee of Safety in regard to the inhabitants of Princess Anne, unavoidably produced much private distress. A petition was accordingly presented to that Committee, entreating them to rescind in part, or to mitigate those resolves.—Sensible of the inconveniencies which thus arose from a compliance with the orders alluded to in their fullest latitude, the Committee came, on the 3d of May, to a resolution, “that William Robinson, Thomas Reynolds Walker, Thomas Olds, John Thorowgood, James Henley, Erasmus Haynes, & William Wishart, Gentlemen, or any four, or more of them, do assemble themselves together, and having taken an oath, before a magistrate, or Committee-man, to do equal and impartial justice, and to keep each others' secrets, proceed to make strict enquiry into the temper and former conduct of the inhabitants of the county of Princess Anne, and certify to the Hon. Major General Lee, or the commanding officer at Suffolk, or its neighbourhood, which of them have taken an active part in behalf of America, which have remained quiet at home, without taking any active part on either side, and who have appeared inimical to America; on which certificate the General or Commanding officer, is desired to suffer all such as have been friends, or neutrals, to remain at their habitations with their families, but to remove all their

Mitigation  
of the orders  
respecting  
Princess  
Anne,

May 3.

\* So intent was Lee upon vigorous preparatory measures that he sent Colonel Gibson and Captain Lynn to New-Orleans, for the purpose of obtaining gun-powder from the Governor. This expedition, replete with danger, was successful. 12,000 pounds of powder were purchased for \$1800, and brought to Virginia, in 1777.

CHAP.  
VIII.

live stock, except such as the Commissioners above named shall judge necessary for their immediate subsistence: — And that all the enemies of America in the said county be compelled to remove with their families and effects, according to the former resolution; and the said commissioners are desired to return their whole proceedings to this Committee, to be laid before the general Convention."

and Norfolk  
county.

May 4.

May 11, 16.

A similar resolution was taken, on the following day, in respect to Norfolk county, and James Holt, John Wilson, John Portlock, Cornelius Calvert, Thomas Mash, Jun'r. Arthur Boush, and John Willoughby, Jun'r. were appointed Commissioners, for the purposes, and with the powers specified by the Committee. Two resolutions of the Convention, the one passed on the 11th, the other on the 16th of May, ultimately fixed the hitherto fluctuating policy, pursued in relation to that obnoxious and unfortunate part of the Colony. We subjoin them both, under an impression that the details of those early transactions, constitute an interesting part of national history.

### IN CONVENTION, MAY the 11th, 1776.

*Resolved*, That all the inhabitants of the counties of Princess Anne and Norfolk, who reside to the North Eastward of the following line to wit: From the mouth of the Western Branch, and up the same to the road at Brittles mill, thence along the said road to the Great Bridge, and from thence along the road by the North West landing, to the North Carolina boundary, ought to be immediately removed with their families and effects to some interior parts of the Colony. And that all such other inhabitants of the counties of Norfolk and Nansemond, who are manifestly unfriendly to the American cause, ought in like manner to be removed with their families and effects. And that the residue of the inhabitants in the two last mentioned counties, who reside to the Westward of the line aforesaid, remain till the further order of this Convention; unless the General or Commanding officer of the troops in that neighbourhood, shall find it absolutely necessary to remove any of those seated near the posts occupied by his troops before the Convention can be consulted, in which case he is at liberty to remove such persons.

*Resolved*, That a sum of money, not exceeding one thousand pounds, be advanced to Archibald Cary, James Murdaugh, John King, John Driver, Wills Cowper, Thomas Reynolds Walker, Henry Bracey, William Smith, Turner Southall, Robert Goode, Richard James, William Archer, Henry Delany, Gentlemen, or any three, or more of them, to be applied to the assistance of such persons, as in their opinion, may not be able to remove themselves.— And the said gentlemen, are hereby empowered, and requested to make proper provision for those necessary pur-



poses ; and in general, to superintend this important business, and be assisting in the execution thereof, in the most humane manner the nature of the case will admit of. And it is earnestly recommended to all persons, who can provide habitations for such persons so removing, to give notice thereof in the Virginia Gazette, as speedily as possible.

That the expences attending the removal of the persons aforementioned from Princess-Anne and Norfolk counties, who are friendly to the cause of America, be borne by the public ; and that the expences incurred by the removal of those who are unfriendly, be repaid to the public out of their estates ; and that the Clerks of the courts of the said counties of Norfolk and Princess Anne, be furnished with waggons, for the removal of the public Records of those courts, to some place of security.

EDMUND PENDLETON, P.

IN CONVENTION, MAY 16, 1776.

WHEREAS, the season of the year is so far advanced, that it is too late to begin a crop of Indian corn, and as the inhabitants of the counties of Norfolk and Princess Anne, who are by order of this Convention to be removed, may be greatly distressed, for want of subsistence the next year ; *Resolved*, therefore, that only the women and children and male slaves capable of bearing arms, with the live stock of the said counties, be removed, and that the other inhabitants of the said counties, who are not inimical, be allowed to continue in it, for the tending and gathering their crops of corn.

EDMUND PENDLETON, Pres'dt.

*A Copy,*

JOHN TAZEWELL, C. C.

Several circumstances had combined to produce the awful, yet salutary idea that a tremendous storm would soon burst over some part of the Southern Colonies. The appearance of Sir Henry Clinton, between the Capes of Virginia ; his subsequent junction with Governor Martin, at Cape Fear ; the efforts of the Highlanders and Regulators, so happily crushed by Brigadier Moore ; the rumors from the North, that General Howe, after evacuating Boston, was sailing to Virginia, and the redoubled activity of Dunmore and his adherents, to intrench themselves in a favorable situation, were so many indications of an approaching crisis. Still those indications were, in some measure, vague and indefinite. Among many other signal interpositions of Providence, in behalf of the American cause, a discovery was made, which ascertained a danger, hitherto doubtful and obscure ; and by convincing the peo-

Barron intercepts important despatches from England.

CHAP.  
VIII.

ple that invasion was at hand, energized their endeavours to be prepared to repel it. Early in April, Capt. James Barron took a small vessel, dispatched by Lord Dunmore to Annapolis, in Maryland, for the purpose of conveying to Governor Eden of that Colony, letters addressed to him by the British Secretary of State. These letters were found in custody of a Mr. Ross, formerly an associate of the infamous Connelly, and now a faithful and zealous emissary of the Ex-Governor; and immediately brought to Williamsburg. One of these, dated Whitehall, Dec. 23, 1775, contained the following passage: "An armament, consisting of seven regiments with a fleet of Frigates and small ships, is now in readiness to proceed to the Southern Colonies, in order to attempt the restoration of regular government, in that part of America. It will proceed, in the first place, to North-Carolina, and thence either to South-Carolina, or Virginia, as circumstances of greater or less advantage shall point out. If to the latter, it may have consequences very important to the Colony under your government; and, therefore, you will do well to consider of every means by which you may, in conjunction with Lord Dunmore, give facility and assistance to its operations." Thus were the Southern Colonies fortunately warned and inspired to assume a respectable defensive attitude. On the 18th of April, the Ann and Isabella, with part of the 17th regiment, arrived at Cape-Fear; thirteen transports soon reached the same point; and, on the 3d of May, twenty more sail arrived with Sir P. Parker, Lord Cornwallis, General Vaughan, and other officers of distinction. Upon intelligence of this, General Lee immediately resolved to fly to the protection of North-Carolina. He was, however, inclined to think that either South-Carolina or Virginia, would be the object of the enemy's first attack, though rage and revenge might prompt them to make an attempt against Wilmington, where he hoped that Brigadier Moore was sufficiently prepared for successful opposition. He, therefore, meant to take post at Newbern, to watch the determination of the invaders, and meet them at any point they might select for the theatre of their meditated hostilities. On the 12th of May, he began to march for Newbern, directing his route through Halifax. Brigadier General Howe attended him, with his brave Carolinians; and Colonel Mullenburg's regiment was ordered to follow with all possible speed. On his arrival at Newbern, General Lee received another tribute of public confidence and gratitude. A committee, selected by the inhabitants of that Town, waited upon him, to express the high sense universally entertained of his generous and manly exertions in defence of American rights and liberties; to offer him their cordial congratulations for his appearance among them, at a time when their Province was actually invaded by a powerful fleet and army;

General Lee  
marches to  
N. Carolina.

May 12.

Arrives at  
Newbern.

and to assure him of their happiness at finding the command of the troops destined for their protection, placed in the hands of a gentleman of his distinguished character.

CHAP.  
VIII.

By his directions, Kemp's Landing had been evacuated, immediately after his departure from Virginia; 400 men stationed at the Great Bridge, where an Engineer of acknowledged skill, had erected such works as the occasion required; a battalion posted at Suffolk, and part of the 4th and 5th regiments ordered to relieve the troops under Woodford, who had undergone a long and fatiguing service, and were now recalled to Williamsburg. One hundred and fifty men took post at Smithfield; and the military concerns of Virginia devolved, during General Lee's absence, on Brigadier-General Andrew Lewis. Colonel Dangerfield was stationed near the mouth of the Rappahannock, with a small portion of his regiment. A reinforcement of two hundred men was soon after sent to him from Williamsburg, upon undoubted intelligence that Dunmore's fleet had been observed running up into the Bay.

Military  
measures in  
Virginia.

We have already noticed the energetic measures adopted to preclude the British from obtaining supplies in the vicinity of their strong holds, and along the banks of those waters which their Flotilla infested. By those measures, they were compelled to abandon their intrenchments, and, after burning the barracks which they had erected, near the ruins of Norfolk, to seek a refuge within their wooden walls, where disease, hunger, and other sufferings still pursued them. On the 23d of May, they were seen manœuvring in Hampton roads, with about 103 sail. Various were the reports concerning their destination. Some deserters stated that they were going to Halifax; others, that Cape Fear was the rendezvous assigned to them; by many it was expected that they would effect a landing, and make a new attack on Hampton. Preparations to receive them were in a vigorous train, when, after several movements, they were suddenly seen to sail up the Bay as before mentioned—appeared at the mouth of the Rappahannock, and finally landed and intrenched themselves on Gwynn's Island, in the county of Gloucester. This spot, naturally pleasant and fertile, and considerably improved and embellished by the labors of husbandry, abounding in cattle, esculent vegetables, and excellent water, and enjoying the additional advantage of a comparatively salubrious atmosphere, presented to them a desirable asylum; but the seal of reprobation was now imprinted on their foreheads, and they were doomed soon to be hunted out of this Eden.

Dunmore  
quits his  
station for  
Gwynn's  
Island.

May 23.

In the meanwhile, the Convention did not lose sight of the transcendant objects which the singular situation of their country, and the confidence of their fellow-citizens, had made it their task to accomplish. Conformably to

Declaration  
of rights.



CHAP.  
VIII.June 12.  
Constitution

one of the memorable resolutions of the 15th of May, a committee, consisting of 28 members prepared a "*Declaration of rights*," which was reported, fully discussed, and finally adopted by the Convention, on the 12th of June.— Upon this foundation the superstructure of the new government was raised, on the 29th of the same month, when the *Constitution* was unanimously adopted. Early in March, South Carolina had framed a Constitution virtually independent, it is true, but only temporary, since it was to exist "till a reconciliation between Great Britain and the Colonies should take place, and no longer." Virginia was foremost in absolutely and irrevocably throwing off the galling and disgraceful yoke of British oppression, and in erecting, on the immutable base of natural and social rights, a fabric of civil government, originating in the will of the people, and sanctioned by their approbation; two characters which the Constitution cannot be denied to have possessed at the time of its birth, whether it be considered as the act of an ordinary Legislature, or as the offspring of special delegated authority.\*

Mr. Jefferson's preamble.

The preamble, reciting the various acts of misrule by which the Government of Virginia, as formerly exercised under the Crown of Great-Britain, was now totally dissolved, had been transmitted by Thomas Jefferson, from Philadelphia, where that illustrious patriot was then attending the General Congress, together with a plan of a new Constitution, or form of Government; his valuable communication reached the Convention just at the moment when the plan originally drawn up by Colonel George Mason, and afterwards discussed and amended, was to receive the final sanction of that venerable body. It was now too late to

---

\* It is foreign to the Province of the Historian to consider whether the Constitution was merely "a temporary organization of Government, framed by men possessing no powers above those of ordinary Legislators," or the act of a body, superior to an ordinary Legislature, and appointed for the special purpose of giving to the people a form of Government, intended to be permanent, fundamental, and unalterable, except by the people themselves, through their immediate Deputies. The acknowledged defects of that Constitution, defects which originated in novelty, inexperience and haste, (for letters from distinguished members of the Convention, and other respectable characters of that day, at this very moment before us, prove that an ardent, and even zealous desire of creating a national government, prevented adequate discussion and maturity) rather than the informality of its birth, require, if not a total change, at least, considerable amendments. And, indeed, the mere circumstance of its being a problem "Whether Virginia has a Constitution, or not," is sufficient to induce the call of a Convention, to establish genuine fundamentals of government. Mr. Jefferson and Judge Tucker have ably discussed this subject—They differ in opinion, as to the original and nature of the Constitution; but they nearly agree as to its defects, by far the most important part of the question. Let every Virginian, who has at heart the honour and happiness of his country, deeply meditate the observations of those distinguished Gentlemen, upon points so closely connected with both; and let the remedy be promptly and wisely applied! (*See Jefferson's notes on Virginia, and Tucker's Blackstone.*)

CHAP.  
VIII.

retrace previous steps ;\* the session had already been uncommonly laborious ; and considerations of personal delicacy hindered those, to whom Mr. Jefferson's ideas were imparted, from proposing or urging new alterations. Two or three parts of his plan, and the whole of his preamble, however, were adopted ; and to this circumstance must be ascribed the strong similitude between that preamble, and the Declaration of Independence, subsequently issued by the Continental Congress, both having been traced by the same pen.

This Constitution is in the hands of every Virginian ; it will, therefore, suffice to trace here its outlines. It lodges the Executive power in a Governor, chosen annually by the Legislature, and incapable of acting, in this public capacity, more than three years in seven. Eight Counsellors assist in the administration of the government. The Judiciary powers are vested in several courts. Legislation is exercised by a *General Assembly*, consisting of two houses—the one called the House of Delegates, two Delegates representing each county, and being annually chosen by such citizens as possess an estate for life, in 100 acres of uninhabited land, or 25 acres, with a house on the same, or in a house and lot in some town ; the other called the Senate, composed of 24 members, chosen every 4 years, by the same electors, the several counties being distributed into 24 Senatorial Districts. Besides the Governor, the Privy Counsellors, the Judges of the Superior Courts, and most of the Executive officers, are appointed by the General Assembly. All laws originate in the House of Delegates ; the Senate approves or rejects them, or amends them with the consent of the House of Delegates. Money-bills are, in no instance, altered by the Senate, but entirely approved or rejected.

Outlines of  
the Constitution.

The encroachments upon the original extent of Virginia, by the charters erecting the Colonies of Pennsylvania, Maryland, North and South-Carolina, had always been subjects of protestation and complaint. To obviate all subsequent claims, tending to disturb the harmony, so necessary for the triumph of the common cause, the territories contained within those charters were, by a solemn constitutional clause, “ceded, released, and forever con-

Constitutional clause respecting former grants by the Crown to adjacent Colonies.

---

\* “When I came here the plan of government had been committed to the whole house. To those who had the chief hand in forming it, the one you put into my hands was shewn. Two or three parts of this, were with little alteration, inserted in that ; but such was the impatience of sitting long enough to discuss several important points in which they differ, and so many other matters were necessarily to be dispatched before the adjournment, that I was persuaded the revision of a subject the members seemed tired of, would at that time have been unsuccessfully proposed.—The system agreed to, in my opinion, requires reformation. In October, I hope you will effect it.”

CHAP.  
VIII.

firmed to the people of those Colonies, respectively, with all the rights of property, jurisdiction, and government, and all other rights whatever, which might at any time heretofore have been claimed by Virginia, except the free navigation and use of the rivers Potomack and Pokomoke, with the property of the Virginia shores, or strands, bordering on either of the said rivers."

The last article of the Constitution declared that, "in order to introduce the new government, the Representatives of the people, met in Convention, should choose a Governor, and Privy-Council, and such other officers, directed to be chosen by both Houses, as might be judged necessary, to be immediately appointed. In pursuance of that article, the following officers were unanimously appointed, immediately upon the adoption of the new mode of government.

Appoin-  
ments under  
the new Con-  
stitution.

June 29.

Patrick Henry, junr. Governor.

John Page, Dudley Digges, John Tayloe, John Blair, Benjamin Harrison, *of Berkeley*; Bartholomew Dandridge, Charles Carter, *of Shirley*; and Benjamin Harrison, *of Brandon*, Counsellors of State.

Thomas Whiting, John Hutchings, Champion Travis, Thomas Newton, jr. and George Webb, Commissioners of Admiralty.

Thomas Everard, and James Coeke, Commissioners for Settling Accounts.

Edmund Randolph, Attorney-General.

The return of Henry to public life, and his appearance upon a theatre so favorable to the display of his patriotic zeal and rare abilities, were greeted by the people and by the army with that pure and vivid satisfaction, which is at all times the best reward of genius and virtue. A Committee of the House was nominated to wait upon him, with the notification of his appointment. Through this Committee, he transmitted to the Convention the following letter :

*To the Honorable the President,  
and House of Convention.*

GENTLEMEN,

The vote of this day, appointing me Governor of the Commonwealth, has been notified to me in the most polite and obliging manner by George Mason, Henry Lee, Dudley Digges, John Blair, and Bartholomew Dandridge, Esquires.

A sense of the high and unmerited honor conferred upon me by the Convention, fills my heart with gratitude, which I trust my whole life will manifest. I take this earliest opportunity to express my thanks, which I wish to convey to you, gentlemen, in the strongest terms of acknowledgment.



When I reflect that the tyranny of the British King and Parliament has kindled a formidable war, now raging throughout this wide extended Continent, and in the operations of which this Commonwealth must bear so great a part, and that from this war the lasting happiness or misery of a great proportion of the human species will finally result; that, in order to preserve this Commonwealth from anarchy, and its attendant ruin, and to give vigor to our councils, and effect to all our measures, government has been necessarily assumed and new modelled; that it is exposed to numberless hazards and perils, in its infantine state; that it can never attain to maturity, or ripen to firmness, unless it is guarded by affectionate assiduity, and managed by great abilities, I lament my want of talents. I feel my mind filled with anxiety and uneasiness, to find myself so unequal to the duties of that important station to which I am called by the favor of my fellow-citizens, at this truly critical conjuncture. The errors of my conduct will be atoned for, as far as I am able, by unwearied endeavours to secure the freedom and happiness of our common country.

I shall enter upon the duties of my office whenever you, gentlemen, shall be pleased to direct; relying upon the known wisdom and virtue of your honorable House to supply my defects, and to give permanency and success to that system of government which you have formed, and which is so wisely calculated to secure equal liberty, and advance human happiness.

I have the honor to be, &c.

P. HENRY, Junior.

The first and second Virginia regiments, in strains expressive of respect and joy, congratulated him "upon his unsolicited promotion to the highest honors which a grateful people could bestow."

"Uninfluenced," they said, "by private ambition, regardless of sordid interest, you have uniformly pursued the general good of your country; you have taught the world that an ingenuous love of the rights of mankind, an inflexible resolution and a steady perseverance in the practice of every private and public virtue, lead directly to preferment, and give the best title to the honors of an uncorrupted and vigorous state.

"Once happy under your military command, we hope for more extensive blessings from your civil administration.

"Our hearts are willing, and arms ready, to support your authority, as chief magistrate; happy that we have lived to see the day when freedom and equal rights, established by the voice of the people, shall prevail through the land!"

CHAP.  
VIII.

In returning his cordial thanks for an address so strongly expressive of confidence and attachment, the new Governor said:

"The high appointment to which my fellow-citizens have called me, was, indeed, unsolicited, unmerited. I am, therefore, under increased obligation to promote the safety, dignity, and happiness of the Commonwealth.

"While the civil powers are employed in establishing a system of government, liberal, equitable, in every part of which the genius of equal liberty breathes her blessed influence, to you is assigned the glorious task of saving by your valour, all that is dear to mankind. Go on, Gentlemen, to finish the great work, which you have so nobly and so successfully begun. Convince tyrants again, that they shall bleed, that you will bleed to your last drop, before their wicked schemes find success.

"The remembrance of my former connexions with you, shall be ever dear to me. I honor your profession. I revere that patriot virtue which, in your conduct, has produced cheerful obedience, exemplary courage, and contempt of hardship and danger."

July 5.  
Adjournment of the  
Convention.

On the 5th day of July, the Governor, the Members of the Privy Council, and other Executive officers took the respective oaths prescribed for them by an ordinance passed on the preceding day. Thus was an independent Commonwealth completely organized in Virginia. After altering such parts of the liturgy as related to the King's Majesty and the Royal Family, the Convention adjourned themselves to the first Monday in the ensuing October.

Summary of  
their pro-  
ceedings.

The proceedings of that body during the session terminated by this adjournment, though not extensive as to number, were extremely important in substance. The declaration of rights, and the new form of government would alone have sufficed to illustrate this period; but we may add to them useful regulations for the better defence and protection of the Colony, the erection of salt works, the establishment of a naval board, the raising of additional troops of horse, the punishment of the enemies of America, the administration of justice, the management of fiscal affairs, and the prevention of fraud in counterfeiting the Continental paper-currency. The letters from Lord Germaine to Governor Eden also employed, at an early date, the attention of the Convention. Justly irritated by the tenor of those letters, they desired the Convention of Maryland to seize on the person of the obnoxious Governor, and a request was made by the Continental Congress to the same body, that, when secured they would send him to Philadelphia. General Lee had already urged the measure to Mr. Purvoyance, Chairman of the Committee of Baltimore, who actually dispatched Captain Smith, with forty minute-men to seize the person of Governor Eden;

and did seize his sailing-boat. The Committee of safety at Annapolis, and the military assembled there, expressed great discontent at the bold step taken by Mr. Purvoyance, and opposed its execution. Governor Eden was, however, desired to give his word that he would not leave the Colony, until the meeting of the General Convention, and Mr. Purvoyance was also made to give bail for his appearance there at that time. The Convention met, and, instead of complying with what was requested of them on that point, simply intimated to Eden their wish that he should retire on board one of the King's ships; and the President and others attended him to the water side. He repaired on board the Fowey, with a safe conduct from that Convention, it being intended that he should leave Annapolis for England. To that safe conduct, the Convention of Virginia refused to become accessory, resenting the improper forbearance shewn to so dangerous an enemy of the common cause, the little attention paid to their request and to the recommendation of Congress, and the facilities thus afforded to Eden for assisting in the destruction of Virginia; for, it was supposed that he would not repair to England; and, supposing he should, it was feared lest he might assume the character of a public agent, and by promoting division and disunion among the Colonies, produce consequences most fatal to America. At the same time, the Convention of Virginia warned the good people of Maryland to guard against the intrigues and inimical disposition of the insidious Governor, as well as against the baneful proprietary influence.—Another remarkable proceeding of the Convention was the choice of G. Wythe, Thos. Nelson, junr. Richard H. Lee, Thos. Jefferson, and Francis Lightfoot Lee, to represent Virginia in General Congress for one year. This reduction of the number of Delegates to five was predicated on two ostensible motives, economy, and a wish to obtain the aid of the supernumeraries in the arduous business of internal government. It appears, however, that the appointment of Dr. Rickman as Physician and Director-General to the Continental Hospital in the Colony, had created much prejudice against Col. Harrison, because that appointment was ascribed to his influence, and Dr. McClurg, a native, and regular bred Physician of eminent abilities, strongly recommended by the Committee of safety and General Lee, had by that means remained unemployed. As to Mr. Braxton, his address on government was not universally relished; and his popularity had been, in some degree, impaired by persons whose political indiscretions, though beyond his controul, fatally reacted against him. Thomas Jefferson had intimated a wish to decline a re-election, but his excuses were overruled by the Convention. This re-appointment, however, insuperable domestic impediments did not permit him



CHAP. to accept.\* and Benjn. Harrison resumed, in consequence  
VIII. of this circumstance, his former station in the General Congress, receiving at the same time, the thanks of the Legislature for the diligence, ability, and integrity with which he had before discharged the like trust.

We have left General Lee in North Carolina, watching the motions of the formidable British armament, collected at Cape Fear, and ready to convey assistance wherever it might be wanted. The intentions of the enemy soon became manifest. On the first of June, advice was received by the President of South Carolina, that a fleet of forty or fifty sail had anchored about six leagues from Sullivan's Island. It was justly supposed to be Sir P. Parker's fleet, and this opinion was confirmed by an express from General Lee, announcing that the enemy had sailed from Cape Fear, and that he was himself hastening to the assistance of Charleston with the Continental regiments. The alarm guns had already been fired, and the militia of the country, obedient to the call of the President, flocked to the American standard. On the 5th, a body of British troops landed and encamped on Long Island, separated only by a small creek from Sullivan's island. This last is situated about six miles below the neck of land, formed by the confluence of Ashley and Cooper rivers, and on which Charleston stands. Its proximity to the channel renders it a favorable station for annoying, if not destroying ships, in their approach to the Town. At this critical juncture, a Fort of Palmetto wood had been raised there, but yet remained in an unfinished state. The Palmetto is peculiarly suited for such a purpose.† Its trunk is from twenty to forty feet long, entirely without branches; and its ligneous part is so soft and spongy that a cannon-ball sinks into it without splintering, and becomes there perfectly innoxious. On the Fort alluded to, about 26 pieces of heavy ordnance, and as many eighteen and nine pounders, had been hastily mounted. It was there that the first great hostile enterprise of the British power in the South was destined to meet with unprecedented repulse and disgrace. The unaccountable procrastination, and singular blunders with which that enterprise was marked, must strike the most superficial observer. Several days had already elapsed in langour and inaction. On the 7th, a boat with a Flag advanced towards the Island; an ignorant sentinel fired at it; and to an officer sent to explain the mistake, Sir H. Clinton delivered a proclamation similar to the tender of pardon which he had issued in North Carolina. This important measure only served to afford to the Americans more

Gen. Lee  
goes to  
Charleston.

\* See Appendix, No. 13.

† The *Chamærops Palmetto* of Michaux.

time for preparation. General Lee, Brigadier-General Howe, Colonels Bullett and Jenifer, and several other officers, together with the troops under their command, arrived on the 9th. The presence of Lee diffused in Charleston, as every where else, joy, confidence, and warlike ardour; his active genius prepared the brilliant success which was soon to crown the American arms. President Rutledge and General Armstrong had already commenced the glorious task. Nothing can equal the zeal and devotion of the citizens. Many edifices of considerable value were pulled down on the wharves, for the purpose of erecting these lines of defence; entrenchments were thrown up round the Town, and the principal streets barricaded; every person, without distinction, took a share in those important works. Several transports had crossed the bar without much injury, two only having run aground, one of which was ultimately saved, and the other went to pieces. The Bristol and the Experiment, both of them fifty gun ships, also passed safely over, at different times, after being lightened of their guns. An attack was daily expected, and every disposition had been made to repel the foe. Col. Gadsden, at the head of the first South Carolina regiment, was stationed at Fort Johnson, about three miles from Charleston, and within point blank shot of the channel. Colonels Moultrie and Thomson, with the second and third regiments of South Carolina, occupied the two extremities of Sullivan's Island. At Haddrell's Point, and on the margin of the Bay, in front of the Town, the rest of the troops were posted. Clinton had fixed on the 23d for a joint attack by the fleet and the army; but that decisive blow was postponed till the 28th, owing to a series of circumstances, which seemed to be providentially ordered for the triumph of the American cause. The ardour of the patriot army, far from being damped by awful suspense, was hourly increased by the example and the excitement of heroic and undaunted chiefs. An oath of fidelity proposed to the militia, was cheerfully assented to—it was the harbinger of victory.

On the memorable 28th, the Fort on Sullivan's Island was briskly attacked by the Bristol and Experiment, two fifty gun-ships, (as already observed,) the Active, Action, Solebay, and Syren, four frigates, mounting each 28 guns, the Sphinx of 20 guns, the Friendship, armed vessel of 22 guns, the Ranger Sloop and Thunder-bomb, each of eight guns. The Thunder-bomb, covered by the armed vessel the Friendship, began the attack, between 10 and 11 o'clock in the morning. Her hail of shells was without effect, the Active, Bristol, Experiment, and Solebay, then boldly advanced. A little before 11 o'clock, the garrison fired 4 or 5 shot at the Active, while under sail. These she did not seem to regard, but coming within 350 yards of

The British  
attack Sulli-  
van's Island,

CHAP.  
VIII.

and are re-  
pulsed.

the Fort, dropped anchor, and poured in a broad side. Her example was immediately followed by the 3 other ships; and tremendous and incessant cannonades ensued. The Thunder-bomb continued, at the same time, to throw shells. A firing was then heard from the North East extremity of the Island; and the Acteon, Sphynx, and Syren were seen coming up. They had been ordered to take their stations between the Western end of the Island and Charleston, so as to enfilade that side of the Fort yet, unfinished, and, at the same time, to prevent the communication between the Island and the continent, and obstruct any effort that might have been attempted to interrupt the grand attack. The guardian spirit of America permitted not the execution of a plan, which must inevitably have proved fatal to the attacked fortress, and its defenders. While advancing, the three vessels just named, got entangled with a shoal, called the *middle-ground*. The Sphynx and Acteon, ran 'foul of each other; the Acteon stuck fast; the Sphynx lost her bowsprit in consequence of the accident, whilst the Syren escaped without much injury. But it was now too late for efficient co-operation. The Bomb-vessel had ceased firing. In the afternoon, however, the Syren, in company with the Friendship, came within 500 yards of the Fort, and increased the enemy's fire. This was continued till 11 at night. Vain reinforcement! Fruitless obstinacy! The brave Moutrie, and his raw and unexperienced, but intrepid force, remained calm, unappalled, and regardless of any thing but honor and duty, amid the tremendous roar of the hostile artillery. Cool and deliberate, they reserved their fire for the moment when it could have a most extensive effect. Accordingly the enemy's ships were, most of them, nearly torn to pieces; and his loss in men was considerable. The Bristol particularly suffered; a shot cut her cable, and she remained for sometime exposed to a raking fire from the Fort. Forty of her men were killed and 71 wounded; Captain Morris, who commanded her, lost his arm. The Experiment had 23 killed, and 76 wounded. Scott, her Captain, also lost his arm. Lord Wm. Campbell, the late Governor of the Colony, dearly paid for his quixotic ardour in attempting to recover his lost authority; he received, in his left side, a deadly wound. Sir P. Parker himself was wounded, though not dangerously. The Acteon had a Lieutenant killed and six men wounded. On the Solebay, eight men were disabled. We have noticed the accident which chained the Acteon to the shoals of the *middle-ground*. Next morning, the shattered ships of the enemy, having slipped their cables during the night, were observed about 2 miles from the Island. The Acteon alone, unable to disentangle herself, had remained within reach of the Fort—the garrison fired several shot at her; she at first return-



ed them ; but soon after, her crew, despairing of success in getting her off, set her on fire, and abandoned her, leaving the colours flying, the guns loaded, and all her ammunition and stores behind. They were scarcely gone when several boats from the Island repaired to her ; the flames rapidly spreading on all sides, did not prevent Lieutenant Jacob Milligan, with other Americans, from bringing off her jack, bell, and as many sails and stores as the boats could contain. They even, in this dangerous situation, fired 3 of her guns at the British Commodore, after which they quitted. She blew up in less than half an hour after their departure. The loss, on the side of the Americans, was inconsiderable. The garrison had only 10 men killed, and 22 wounded. Lieutenants ————, and Gray were among the latter. The works of the Fort received little injury from the many thousand shot fired by the British. The softness of the Palmetto wood rendered such as struck the Fort nearly ineffectual ; but scarcely a hut or tree on the Island escaped. At the beginning of the action, General Lee was at Haddrell's point ; he soon repaired to the Fort, in a small boat, through a shower of balls, and remained there sometime. " The behaviour of the garrison, both men and officers, with Colonel Moultrie at their head (he writes to the President of the Virginia Convention) I confess, astonished me ; it was brave to the last degree. I had no idea that so much coolness and intrepidity could be displayed by a collection of raw recruits, as I was witness of in this garrison—had we been better supplied with ammunition, it is most probable the whole British squadron would have been utterly destroyed. However, they have no reason to triumph ; &c. &c." Although the limits of our plan do not properly admit of extensive details, we cannot forbear paying, in this place, our tribute of admiration to the noble conduct of two American Sergeants. In an early part of the engagement, the flag-staff was shot away : Sergeant Jasper of the Grenadiers, immediately jumped from one of the embrasures on the beach, took up the flag, and fixed it on a sponge-staff ; with this sacred badge in one of his hands, he mounted the merlon, and there leisurely planted it, amid a shower of balls, flying around him. Sergeant M'Donald, while strenuously and undauntedly exerting himself, was shattered by a cannon ball ; he expired in a few minutes, exhorting his comrades, to his very last breath, steadily to persevere in the conflict, and to shew themselves worthy of the noble cause for which he now bled. Jasper, after removing the lifeless hero out of sight, fought with increased ardour, exclaiming from time to time : " Take good aim, comrades ; let us avenge the death of the brave M'Donald !" The day after the action, President Rutledge, presented him with a sword, as a tribute of esteem for his distinguished valour.

**CHAP. VIII.** At the East-end of the Island, Colonels Thomson, Clark, and Harvey were stationed with part of their respective troops, an eight teen pounder, and a field-piece; they prevented the co-operation of the detachment on Long Island, and the landing of troops from the fleet. In the afternoon, Colonel Mulhemburgh, with his Virginia battalion, reinforced them, so that the British land forces were rendered totally useless. "During the engagement," says Dr. Ramsay, "the inhabitants of Charleston stood with arms in their hands at their respective posts, prepared to receive the British, whenever they might land. Impressed with high ideas of British bravery, and diffident of the maiden courage of their own new troops, they were apprehensive that the Forts would be either silenced or passed, and that they should be called to immediate action. The various passions of the mind assumed alternate sway, and marked their countenances with anxious fears or cheerful hopes. Their resolution was fixed to meet the invaders at the waters edge, and dispute every inch of ground, trusting the event to Heaven, and preferring death to slavery." The thanks of Congress were unanimously voted to General Lee, and Colonels Moultrie and Thomson, for their good conduct on this memorable day. Mulhemburgh's Virginians, and the North Carolina troops were complimented by the Commander in Chief, as "equally alert, zealous and spirited;" and the Fort took from that time the name of Fort Moultrie, in honour to the brave patriot then at the head of his garrison.

That this expedition was ill planned and ill-conducted, is sufficiently obvious. Brigadier Robert Howe, thus writes on the subject, to his friend, Colonel Woodford, then at Williamsburg:

"The enemy have made a fine hand of it. Every thing was in their power, had they not trifled away their time, and given us an opportunity of coming up with troops, and the militia of this country to collect themselves. It would be impossible within the verge of a letter to give you a detail of their blunders; I must reserve it for our meeting, which, I hope, draws near. Their attempt upon Sullivan's Island was a wretched piece of policy; but this is exceeded by the manner of making it. They had no business to have attacked it at all, because by running by it with a fair wind, and strong tide (which could have been effected with very little loss) they might have probably taken Charleston, and the Island must have fallen, of course. But, if they were determined to attack it, they ought to have stationed their ships otherwise, and to have assailed it in reverse, while they were battering it in front. This town, when we arrived, had only 900 men in it. These were all militia, most of them indifferently armed; the landing places numerous, many of them not within reach

CHAP.  
VIII.

of a single battery; the Town very extensive and open on every side; so that I do not exaggerate when I say that 800 men, assisted by the ships, might have taken possession of it, &c."

The effects of this victory were incalculably beneficial to the cause of America. The fears of the timid were allayed; the hopes of the sanguine increased; and the malignity of the disaffected neutralized for a time. A circumstance not unworthy of remark, was the continued, and apparently marvellous opposition of General Lee to Sir Henry Clinton—along a coast of vast extent, he seemed to haunt him, like some dire genius, forcing him to retreat wherever he appeared. New-York, Hampton-Roads, Cape-Fear, and Charleston, successively witnessed that singular occurrence.

This refulgence of success in the South, besides its local effects, greatly contributed to cheer the gloom which the unfortunate issue of the expedition into Canada had spread over the North. Every general history of the revolutionary war, offers the details of that series of disasters, which followed the unsuccessful attempt upon Quebec, and the death of the heroic Montgomery. Of these disasters, it is sufficient for us to observe that they forced Congress to turn their attention from projects of conquest, to schemes of defence, on that side also. The celerity and valour of a daring and adventurous band, had conquered Crown-Point, Ticonderoga, St. Johns, and Montreal. Quebec itself had nearly fallen into their hands. But the scene was soon reversed. A phalanx of warriors ever intrepid and unappalled, ever bent on extraordinary achievements, and whom the spirit of the departed Montgomery still seemed to inspire, but worn out with fatigue, sickness, and want, were, in some measure, abandoned to themselves, in the midst of a country whose natives, occasionally exasperated by the irregularities incident to war and conquest, no longer hailed their appearance as that of deliverers, no longer favored and aided their operations, but turned against them in hostile array. Considerable reinforcements now enabled the British not only to expel them from a Province to which they laid a peculiar claim, but, aided by ruthless hordes of Indian allies, and a portion of the mercenaries whom the shambles of Germany had furnished, to advance against the Forts lately acquired by the Colonial army, and in their turn to threaten invasion, attended with more than usual horrors. The immense force gathering for that purpose to its destined point of concentration, elated the hopes of the enemy, and depressed those of America. Every eye was now anxiously turned to that chain of Lakes and Rivers, which formed the Northern Frontier, and where Schuyler and Gates, forgetting the

State of American affairs in the North.



**CHAP.  
VIII.**

---

adverse pretensions of military pre-eminence, harmonized their views and their exertions, in order to prepare the success of future resistance, and the triumph of the common cause, on that important theatre.—About the middle of March preceding, General Washington had, indeed, given a glorious earnest of that splendid destiny which the supreme ruler of all human events reserved for him. He had, almost without effusion of blood, compelled General Howe to evacuate Boston, and thus restored the first victims of Ministerial vengeance to the safe and peaceable enjoyment of their ancient rights, releasing them from the odious pressure of civil and military despotism, and by the speedy and disgraceful flight to which the enemy had been forced, inspiring auspicious confidence and cheerful hopes. But this was only a local benefit. After retiring to Halifax, and there concerting new plans of hostile operations, Howe again put to sea, and, on the 25th of June, appeared at Sandy-Hook, where he was informed by Governor Tryon, of every circumstance connected with the plan of an attack upon New-York —Many were the disaffected in the city, and in the whole Colony; ardent was their zeal, and high their hopes. The American Commander in Chief, scarcely could muster 9000 effective men; most of these were raw troops, and wretchedly armed. If he and his patriot band should escape internal snares and domestic hostility, their destruction by General Howe, and the formidable reinforcements hourly expected from Great-Britain, was inevitable. With this intelligence, and these flattering expectations, Howe possessed himself of Staten-Island, on the second day of July.

## CHAPTER IX.

---

*Declaration of Independence, by the General Congress—Dunmore is driven from Gwynn's Island—Goes up the Potomack—Leaves Virginia—Hostilities of the Creeks and Cherokees—Defeat and submission of these Savages—Return of General Lee to the North—First meeting of the General Assembly of Virginia—Chief proceedings of that Body—Dictatorial scheme—Military events to the Northward—Invasion of Rhode Island—American success at Sea—Critical state of American affairs—Fortitude of Congress in this crisis—Articles of Confederation and perpetual union—Extensive powers given to General Washington—Financial difficulties—Friendly dispositions of most European powers—Leading objects of the mission to France—Dr. Franklin arrives in France—Other missions—Military events during the Winter and the Spring—Howe sails from Sandy Hook—Events on the Lakes.*

### CHAP. IX.

---

Strange situation of America for some time.

THE interval between the commencement of the war, and the period at which we have now arrived, presents a strange civil and political phenomenon. It is a principle of the British Constitution, that the King can do no wrong, and a metaphysical distinction is established between him and his Ministers. Hence the singular contrast observable in the language and practice of the Colonies, in 1775, and the early part of 1776. Setting aside the ideal distinction just alluded to, we see war waged against a Monarch to whom assurances of loyalty and fidelity were frequently given. His authority was opposed by force of arms, and, at the same time, justice was administered in the name of that authority; nay, prayers offered up to Heaven for his safety and prosperity, constituted part of the public worship. A wish to continue under the Constitutional sway of Great-Britain was expressed on all sides; yet, every where a republican Government virtually prevailed. Never was so strong a contrast between words and deeds, exhibited; so true it is that the theoretical fictions of law-givers vanish before the stern realities of human affairs. The common sense of mankind will not long be overruled by maxims of royal infallibility; and practice naturally rectifies, in such cases, the errors of artificial wisdom. Another consideration serves to explain this phenomenon: *Great revolutions are too immense for technical formality.* Such a state of things, however,

CHAP.  
IX.

could not be lasting. This undulation of opinions and measures must subside, and give place to some definite and unchangeable system. In vain the bulk of the people still fondly imagined that American victories would recall the Ministers to acts of justice, if not of condescension. It was evident to men of experience and foresight that the wound had now become incurable, and that all hopes of restoring union and friendship on the former basis, were perfectly illusive. On the part of the Ministers, pride, assuming the semblance of dignity, would create obstinacy not to be shaken. The Americans must necessarily confine themselves to defensive operations ; and should victory uniformly perch on their standards, they could not immediately, or even distantly, endanger the existence of the British Government, the only circumstance, perhaps, capable of pressing on those infatuated Ministers, a mild, equitable, and wise policy. Nor was it rational to hope that, so long as the other parts of the world were open to British industry and enterprize, and so long as a powerful navy protected British commerce, mercantile considerations would induce a relaxation of the tyrannical measures intended against the Colonies. The struggle no longer lay between absolute and limited monarchy ; but between monarchy and republicanism. The alternative now was, *entire independence and liberty, or entire dependence and slavery*. In such a dilemma, it was better to fix on the grand and inspiring object of a separate and independent station. Independence once declared, a solemn oath once taken, never to return to British allegiance ; no, not even to escape utter annihilation, resistance would become more vigorous, more obstinate, and, of course, more successful. This bold and dignified step would conciliate the respect of Foreign States. England herself, haughty England, should her armies eventually be defeated, would treat with the Americans in the character of a free and independent nation, less reluctantly than she would yield to them, as British subjects, those very points in which the present contest had originated ; for war knows of no issue more humiliating, more unpalatable than the necessity of yielding to an enemy the object in dispute. The course to be pursued by America was, therefore, obvious ; late events had also rendered it easy. The success of the American arms in the important Colonies of Massachusetts, Virginia, and South Carolina ; the valorous achievements of the infant continental navy, under commodore Hopkins ; the enormous and rich prizes made on the enemy by American privateers, were so many guarantees which ensured a cheerful acquiescence, on the part of a large majority of the people, in any system which the general Congress might adopt. The fears inspired at first by exaggerated estimates of British prowess, experience and skill, in war, had gradually



subsided ; and confidence in native courage taken their place. The collision of particular views and interests, had yielded to a generous love of country ; and the occasional efforts of the most stubborn among the disaffected, were incoherent, rash, ill supported, and, of course, abortive. Their uniform failure, and the horror which they universally excited, were indeed, promotive of the common good. Of this description, was a dark and infamous scheme to seize, and perhaps, murder, the beloved and revered General in chief, George Washington ; to destroy his small, but heroic army by treacherous means ; and either to burn New York, or deliver it into the hands of the British. The seasonable and fortunate discovery of this horrid plot, electrified the public mind ; inflamed it with a vehement desire of an immediate and irrevocable avulsion from a Government which was supposed to have put the torch and the dagger in the hands of the miscreants concerned in that execrable design. —Nor was it forgotten, that the Ministers had denounced inflexible rigour against the colonies ; that a war now raged, monstrous not only in its origin, but likewise in its mode, and which, it was openly avowed by England, would not admit of those salutary laws and usages, which, in the midst of slaughter and rapine, still present some of the sacred characters of civilization, and solace weeping humanity. In the eyes of America, this was not war : the prohibitory bill had sanctioned piracy, robbery. No Foreign nation, in a state of hostility with the Colonies, would have thought of inflicting such a blow ; much less ought it to have come from a kindred hand. But every endearing tie was rent asunder—what signified the name of mother-country, when the rod of despotism was extended over those from whom more than filial respect and filial affection was claimed ? When the relentless Indian, and the no less odious German mercenary, were sent in terrific array, to effect what Britons blushed and refused to attempt ? Political, as well as natural, bonds of union, ought now to be forever dissolved.—Thus did the idea of Independence gradually gain ground. Nothing else was thought of ; it was the universal topic of private and public deliberation. A last and decisive impulse was given to the American mind, by a Pamphlet which appeared, during that oscillation of sentiment, under the title of “ *Common Sense*.” It was the production of Thos. Paine, a native of England, who had warmly embraced the cause of America, and who, in an eminent degree, possessed the power, as well as the inclination, to serve that noble cause. Nature had gifted him with a strong, comprehensive, and luminous mind ; and with the happy and valuable faculty of accommodating his thoughts and language to vulgar, as well as lofty understandings. He had the full command of

CHAP.  
IX.

---

those moral levers, by which opinion is managed and transferred at will. Paine was in politics, what Archimedes is related to have been in mechanics; nor were his engines less formidable than those of the immortal Syracusan, though in a different sense. His Pamphlet undoubtedly contributed to the Declaration of Independence, in a most striking degree. The author of "*Common Sense*," endeavored to prove that a re-union with England was impracticable—adducing, in support of this assertion, the irreconcilable pretensions of the contending parties—the unconquerable pride of Great Britain—the treachery, rancour, and vindictive spirit of her government. He moreover, established, beyond all possibility of satisfactory answer, the necessity, expediency, and practicability of Independence. His arguments were interspersed with views of royalty, calculated to render it odious and contemptible—all along proposing to substitute a Republican for a Monarchical government. Of the boasted English Constitution, the excellencies of which no one had heretofore dared to call into doubt, he spoke with equal freedom—pointing out, rather irreverentially, the defects of its monarchical branch—and the abuses which had crept into its other branches, which, in his opinion, were intrinsically good. He emphatically enumerated the public calamities, which, especially since the restoration of monarchy, had afflicted England; and thence inferred that there must be in the British Constitution, some essential vice, which rendered it inadequate to the grand and primary object of all governments, the happiness of the people; this radical vice, this secret canker, he asserted to be monarchy.—To that fatal source he traced back frequent intestine quarrels, and endless Foreign wars. Lastly, he congratulated the people of America, upon the blessing which Heaven had now placed within their reach, by affording them a glorious and fortunate opportunity of establishing a Government, which, combining all the excellencies of the British Constitution, would, at the same time be free from its glaring defects.—This work, so well adapted to the circumstances under which it appeared, so much in unison with the public feeling, was read with incredible avidity. The ardent became enthusiastic—the luke-warm, fervid—and many among the Loyalists, overpowered by the arguments and eloquence of the writer, abjured their former sentiments, and joined the sacred banner of their country. On all sides, a loud cry was heard, calling for separation and Independence.

The Congress well saw that the favorable moment had now arrived. But, in order to ascertain still more fully the sense of the people, they issued, on the 15th of May, the resolution before mentioned, recommending to all the Colonies to institute suitable forms of Government. No

measure could have been better calculated to open the eyes of the people on their real interests, and to elicit a formal expression of the general will. This resolution, however, did not immediately produce the desired effect, in all the Colonies. We have already viewed the establishment of a new form of Government in Virginia, and alluded to the temporary Constitution of South Carolina; Connecticut and Rhode Island, had only a few slight alterations to make in the fundamentals of their respective Governments; Maryland, Pennsylvania and New-York, fluctuated for a while, but finally complied with the recommendation of Congress. The other Colonies were more or less prompt in framing particular Constitutions. All these bore a considerable resemblance to the British model, except that monarchy was excluded, and that a jealous controul over the executive every where predominated, evincing those salutary fears which the past had taught the people to entertain for the future.—At the same time, that the Colonial Congresses, or Conventions were thus employed in a new organization of the powers of Government, most of them instructed their Delegates in the General Congress to declare the United-Colonies, free and Independent States. The glorious example given by Virginia, in that respect, has already been noticed.

Strong in this manifestation of the general sentiment, Congress finally agreed on Independence, and declared it, on the fourth of July, in the following words :\*

CHAP.  
IX.

July 4.  
Declaration  
of Independence by the  
Continental  
Congress.

### IN CONGRESS, 4th JULY, 1776.

By the Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled.

#### A DECLARATION :

**WHEN**, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which

---

\* It is not our province to compare the respective merits of the several Colonies, in erecting this noble fabric. Let it suffice for us to observe that this admirable *Declaration*, as well as the original motion for *Independence*, in Congress, came from two members of the Virginia delegation. R. H. Lee moved for the motion, and Mr. Jefferson penned it. We have seen the original draught, in his hand writing. In the committee, Mr. Adams and Dr. Franklin altered only a few words; but, when reported, a *tirade* against slavery, the extirpation of which Great Britain was charged with having prevented, gave some offence to the Delegates from the Carolinas, and was, therefore suppressed. Another *tirade* stating the importation of *Scotch* and other mercenaries, was also expunged, because it seemed to wound the feelings of two or three members, natives of *Scotland*.

¶ Botta in his excellent *Storia della Guerra Americana*, puts in R. H. Lee's mouth, a long and eloquent speech in support of his motion; and another in answer to it, he ascribes to John Dickenson; thus concentrating the arguments, *pro* and *con*, and, at the same time, warning his readers that these speeches were not really delivered. This imitation of the ancient historians has some advantages—but we deem it better, strictly to adhere to facts. We recommend, however, to the youth of Virginia, to read those two speeches, which give a clear view of the whole question.



CHAP. have connected them with another, and to assume among  
 IX. the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to  
 which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them. a  
 decent respect for the opinions of mankind, requires, that  
 they should declare the causes which impel them to the se-  
 paration.

We hold these truths to be self evident—that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate, that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation, till his consent should be obtained: and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the Legislature—a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies, at places, unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representatives Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected ; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large, for their exercise ; the state remaining in the meantime, exposed to all the danger of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States ; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners ; refusing to pass others, to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws, for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers, to harrass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our Legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others, to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws ; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation ;—

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us ;—

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these States ;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world.

For imposing taxes on us without our consent ;

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury ;

For transporting us beyond seas, to be tried for pretended offences ;

For abolishing the free system of English law in a neighbouring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government and enlarging its boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies.

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments.

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power, to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

## CHAP.

## IX.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is, at this time, transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the work of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun, with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow citizens taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections among us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms ; our petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince whose character is thus marked, by every act, which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts made by their legislature, to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and consanguinity. We must therefore acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind—enemies in war—in peace friends.

WE, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world, for the rectitude of our intentions, Do, in the name, and by the authority of the good People of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States ; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection, between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved ; and that, as Free and Independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support



of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour."

CHAP.  
IX.

Thus was the birth of Independence solemnly proclaimed. Regardless of the perils which surrounded her cradle, and resolved to nurse her into vigour, to cherish her into maturity, the people hailed her auspicious appearance with reverential joy, and steady confidence. What was to them the smallness of their armies? What, the exhausted state of their Treasury? What the threatening and formidable attitude of the tyrant, the distant and uncertain chance of Foreign succours? They were now Free and Independent, and resolved to live so, or to live no more. With such a disposition, they were invincible. Moral forces are the true bulwarks of nations. On the eighth of July, Independence was celebrated at Philadelphia with every mark of universal exultation; bonfires, discharges of artillery, joyous acclamations, announced the momentous era. At New-York, the Declaration was, on the 11th of the same month, read to each brigade of the American army, then stationed in that city, and its neighbourhood:—it was heard with a respectful attention, soon succeeded by prolonged bursts of enthusiastic applause. In the evening, the equestrian statue of George III, erected in 1770, was laid prostrate; and its leaden materials were afterwards converted into bullets. In Baltimore and Boston, the patriots gave to their rejoicings still more vivid tints. Every trace of royalty was there obliterated. In Virginia, this confirmation of the popular wishes, and of the act by which a republican government had already been established, excited feelings which transcend all description. The interesting scene exhibited at Williamsburg, on the adoption of the Constitution, was renewed with additional effusions of that genuine, heart-felt joy, which flows from great national events. The pompous emblems of royal authority had already disappeared; an appropriate seal for the Commonwealth, now superseded that, formerly used by the representative of royalty, in the Colony.\*

Rejoicings  
on account of  
Independence.

During these transactions, the naval and military force of Virginia had not remained inactive. Two hundred and seventeen Scotch Highland regulars, were, on the 22d of June, brought to Williamsburg. Taken by the adventurous Captain Biddle, off the banks of Newfoundland, in the Oxford, a Transport from Clyde, but afterwards separated from their conqueror by a storm, they had overpowered the Prize-master and his few companions, and steered for Hampton Roads, where they expected to find

Capture of  
the Oxford.

\* See Appendix, No. 14.

**CHAP. IX.** shelter and employment with Lord Dunmore. The **Ex-** Governor, as already related, had now quitted that station. Captain Barron fell in with the Oxford, and again compelled her to humble her flag. Among these prisoners, were many valuable tradesmen. It was proposed to them peaceably to prosecute their respective occupations in the country; but few of them embraced the proposal. In general, their prejudices against America, were violent; and, strange effect of contending passions! many among them exhaled, in the same breath, an inconsistent rage against the Parliament and the Congress. The most stubborn, were ordered up to Richmond, at the falls of James river, and there placed under an adequate guard. Other, but less important prizes, were about the same time, brought into the principal rivers of Virginia. By a striking providential interposition, a similar good fortune had crowned the boldness and vigilance of the northern cruizers—They also had intercepted multitudes of armed mercenaries, and neutralized their aid.

Dunmore is driven from Gwynn's Island.

Fire rafts, row-galleys, and floating batteries, were rapidly constructed; and whilst Colonel Stephens was fortifying Portsmouth, and providing for the command of the whole harbour of Norfolk, Brigadier General Lewis prepared to attack Dunmore, and to dislodge him from his strong and comfortable station, on Gwynn's Island. The following narrative, transcribed from Purdie's Gazette, for July 29th, gives a full view of the manner in which this important object was accomplished:

“We got to the Island on Monday, the 8th, and next morning, at 8 o'clock, began a furious attack upon the enemy's shipping, camp, and fortifications, from two batteries, one of five, six and nine pounders; the other mounting two eighteen pounders. What forces the enemy had, were encamped on a point of the Island, nearly opposite to our five gun battery, covered by a battery of four embrasures, and a breast-work of considerable extent. Besides this, they had two other batteries, and a stockade fort, higher up the Haven, where troops were stationed, to prevent our landing. In the Haven were three tenders; one a sloop, (the Lady Charlotte) mounting six carriage guns; a schooner of two carriages, six swivels and cohorn; and a pilot boat, badly armed; who had orders from Captain Hammond, of the Raebuck, to prevent our boats passing over to the Island, and to annoy the rebels by every means in their power. General Lewis announced his orders for attacking the enemy, by putting a match to the first gun, an eighteen pounder, himself: And the Dunmore, being then nearest to us, at the distance of about 500 yards, it passed through her hull, and did considerable damage.—Our five gun battery, likewise began playing on the fleet,

the enemy's camp and works ; And the fire soon became so hot, that the Dunmore was obliged to cut her cables and haul off, after receiving ten shot, some of which raked her fore and aft. The Otter lay next to her, and it was expected would have taken her birth, but the first shot we gave her took place, supposed between wind and water, and she immediately slipped her cable likewise, and hauled out on a careen, without firing a gun. By this time all the fleet any way near shore, began to slip their cables, in the utmost confusion ; and had the wind set in with a flood tide, we must have taken great numbers of them. Our eighteen pounders did great execution from the upper battery, which raked the whole fleet ; and Captain Denny, who commanded the other battery, soon silenced the enemy at the point, knocking down several tents, which put their camp into a great confusion. At half after 9, the firing ceased, which was renewed again at 12 with double vigour, from both batteries ; and nothing prevented our pushing to the Island, during the cannonade, but the want of vessels.

The General being determined to cross the next day, gave orders for all the small crafts to be collected together, from the neighboring creeks that night, and two brass field pieces, six pounders, to be carried to a place, called Lower Wind Mill Point, to attack the tender that lay there, and facilitate our crossing. Accordingly, in the morning, Captain Harrison, who had the direction of those field-pieces, began playing upon the tenders, which he galled so much, that the schooner run up a small creek, which indented the Island, where the crew abandoned her, and the sloop got aground in reach of our cannon ; upon which the General ordered Captain Smith, of the 7th regiment, with his company, to man the canoes, and board her, which was done with alacrity. However, before our men came up with her, the crew got into their boat, and pushed for the Island. But Captain Smith, very prudently passing the tender, pursued them so close, that before they could reach the shore, he exchanged a few shot with them, and took part of them prisoners. The enemy's look-outs perceiving our men close upon the lower part of the Island, cried out, " the shirt-men are coming !" and scampered off. The pilot boat made no resistance.

General Lewis then ordered two hundred men under Colonel M'Clanahan, to land in the Island which was performed as expeditiously as our small vessels would admit of. On our arrival, we found the enemy had evacuated the place with the greatest precipitation, and were struck with horror at the number of dead bodies, in a state of putrefaction, strewed all the way from their battery to Cherry-Point, about two miles in length, with a shovel full of earth upon them ; others gasping for life ; and some had



CHAP.  
IX.

---

crawled to the water edge. who could only make known their distress by beckoning to us. By the small pox, and other malignant disorders which have raged on board the fleet for many months past, it is clear they have lost, since their arrival at Gwyn's Island, near five hundred souls. I myself counted one hundred and thirty graves, or rather holes loosely covered over with earth, close together, many of them large enough to hold a Corporal's guard. One in the middle was neatly done up with turf, and is supposed to contain the remains of the late Lord Gosport. Many were burnt alive in brush huts, which in their confusion, had got on fire. In short, such a scene of misery, distress, and cruelty, my eyes never beheld ; for which the authors, one may reasonably conclude. never can make atonement in this world. The enemy left behind them in their battery, a double fortified nine pounder, a great part of their baggage, with several tents and marquees, beside the three Tenders, with their cannon, small arms, &c. Also the anchors and cables of the Dunmore, Otter, and many others, to the amount, it is supposed, of twelve hundred pounds. On their leaving the Island, they burnt some valuable vessels which had got a ground. Mr. John Grymes' effects on the Island have fallen into our hands. consisting in thirty five negroes, horses, cattle and furniture.

Major Byrd, on the approach of our canoes to the Island, was huddled into a cart, in a very sick and low condition, it is said, and carried down to Cherry-Point. where he embarked. The second shot the Dunmore received, cut her boatswain in two, and wounded two or three others ; and she had scarcely recovered from the shock, when a nine pounder from the lower battery entered her quarter, and beat in a large timber, from the splinters of which Lord Dunmore got wounded in the legs, and had all his valuable china smashed about his ears. It is said his Lordship was exceedingly alarmed. and roared out ' good God, that ever I should come to this !'

We had our information from one of his people that came ashore after the engagement, and was taken by our scouts. He likewise said, that many were killed in the fleet, which had sustained some thousand pounds worth of damage. The Fowey and Roebuck were the lowermost ships, besides which there were one hundred and odd sail of large vessels, who took their departure on Thursday afternoon and are supposed to have gone into Potomack.

In this affair we lost not a man. but poor Captain Arundel, who was killed by the bursting of a mortar of his own invention, although the General and all the officers were against his firing it. His zeal for the service cost him his life."

Immediately after this defeat, we find Dunmore retreating to St. George's Island, in the Potomack. This station

CHAP.  
IX.

July 23:

Dunmore  
goes up the  
Potomack.

he found no less unquiet than that which he had just left. He was soon compelled to abandon it by a brave detachment from Maryland, who killed 11 of his men, and burnt two of his tenders. Ascending the Potomack, he left, on many parts of its banks, hideous traces of piratical and predatory warfare. A little above the mouth of Aquia-creek, Mr. William Brent's elegant brick house was burnt to the ground. The neighbouring militia, seized with causeless alarm, retired without opposing the ravages of the lawless free-booters, who, after the destruction of the house, were proceeding to burn a valuable merchant-mill, at a small distance, when 30 of the Prince-William militia happily arrived, advanced with fearless step, and drove them on board. The spirit and bravery of the people of Stafford-county in general, amply redeemed, on subsequent occasions, the momentary disgrace of that unaccountable panic;\* but the circumstance is yet well remembered in the environs; and we have heard more than once, on the very ruins of the prostrated edifice, the ludicrous account which the senile garrulity of some among the surviving actors in that scene, was ever ready to give. It appears that the Stafford militia mistook the detachment from Prince-William for Englishmen, and exerted all the agility and ingenuity of which they were capable to avoid falling into their hands. Dunmore's fleet, consisting of the Roebuck, Mercury, Otter, an armed ship, some Gondolas, and several Tenders, having taken in fresh water, fell down the river on the ensuing day. They had, in this expedition, met with a severe gale of wind, which drove on shore several small vessels with the friends of the British Government on board. These were made prisoners, and sent to Williamsburg under an escort. The third regiment and other troops had been stationed along the banks of the Potomack, to watch the motions of the enemy, whilst the infant Virginian fleet, consisting of some armed brigs and row-gallies, was cruising for them in the bay. The Roebuck alone could protect Dunmore and his wretched followers. The expected conflict was prevented by the flight of the foe. The excessive heat of the season, the putridity of the water, the scantiness and bad quality of the provisions on board, the crowded and inconvenient situation of the people there, engendered complicated and malignant diseases, which hourly plunged into a watery tomb multitudes of the motley band. Thus, loaded with the execration of the country, defeated in all his schemes of civil discord, and of servile and savage hostility, hunted from station to station by the resentment of an injured peo-

Leaves Vir-  
ginia.

\* Stafford County paid to the revolution, its full quota of military prowess. It gave it among other heroes, the brave and amiable William Washington, whose eminent services, we shall soon have occasion to record.

CHAP.  
IX.

August 5,

ple, naturally prone to loyalty, gratitude, and attachment, pursued, as it were, by Heaven and the elements themselves, Dunmore, with a wounded and humbled spirit, saw himself reduced to flee from these shores, where he had hoped triumphantly to plant the standard of despotism, and to satiate his vindictive and haughty passions with the tears and abjection of the feeble, and the blood of the brave. After burning such vessels as he was able to spare, to prevent their falling into the hands of the Americans, he steered for Lynhaven bay with about 40 or 50 sail; and then parting with the miserable companions of his disastrous fate, he sent some of them to St. Augustine, under convoy of the Otter, some to Bermuda, some to the West-Indies, and some to Europe. With the rest, he repaired to Sir P. Parker's fleet, and, on the 14th of August, reached Staten-Island, where General Howe had lately been joined by his brother, and the fleets under convoy of Commodore Hotham, and the Repulse. Towards the close of this eventful year, he returned to England in the Fowey.

Hostilities  
of the Creek  
and Chero-  
kees.

Another branch of formidable hostility now remained to be lopped off. The nefarious plot, at the head of which we have seen the adventurer Connelly, was only part of an extensive scheme, which had been early formed, and even after the detection and apprehension of that infamous agent, continued to be actively promoted, and now broke out in several places, with alarming violence. The co-operation of the numerous warlike Indian tribes, bordering on the north-western and the southern settlements, had been courted by the British, ever since the commencement of the contest. In their wars with the French, they had been taught the importance of that co operation; and upon it and the efforts of the Loyalists, who abounded in those remote settlements, they had built the most sanguine expectations. Whilst British fleets and armies should assail and lay waste the Atlantic regions, the Indians and the disaffected would, by simultaneous hostilities, in the north-west, the west, and the south, divide the strength and attention of the Patriots, eventually effect a junction with the Eastern invaders, or, at least, greatly favour the success of their plans, by well-timed and formidable diversions. Early apprized of the whole extent of these machinations, Congress and General Washington endeavoured to counteract their mischievous tendency. On the side of the Lakes, the influence of General Schuyler, was opposed to that of Sir John Johnson. Neutrality was solemnly promised by the six nations; but, as their warlike and restless temper, together with their avidity for spoil, could not long permit them to remain inactive spectators of the contest, care was taken to enlist them on the side of America; a measure simply retaliatory—and stripped of



CHAP.  
IX.

its original odium, by the well ascertained impossibility of keeping the Indians neutral—by the limited number to be employed, which number was not to exceed two thousand—and by the certainty that they should act, only against other savages, or against English MEN in arms, and their German auxiliaries, whereas the native hordes employed by the enemy, chiefly directed their ferocious and unrelenting rage against peaceable settlements, where age, infancy, and the helpless sex, indiscriminately bled under the murderous tomahawk. In the South, British intrigue prevailed. Stuart, a wily and indefatigable Ministerial Agent, concerted with the King's Governors and other servants of the crown, a plan of co-operation with the disaffected and the Indians, against the Western Frontiers of the Southern States. By the providential capture of Moses Kirkland, one of the Loyalists concerned in that plan, the atrocious means to which the British administration blushed not to resort, were brought to light; and the efforts of the royal emissaries, in a great degree, frustrated. Yet, the impulse given to the fierce minds of those ruthless savages, whose element is war, could not be checked. Yielding to excitements, so much in unison with their inherent brutal appetite for blood and rapine, the Creeks first took up the hatchet; and their incipient hostilities were stamped with the usual character of savage warfare. Finding, however, that no British assistance was likely to support their rash and unwarrantable aggression; threatened, besides, by an overwhelming force from South-Carolina, they laid down their arms, and so faithfully adhered to the terms of the peace which was granted to them, that they refused to neighbouring tribes, who had also entered upon hostile operations, and obstinately persisted in that barbarous course, succours earnestly and emphatically demanded, returning in answer, “that the Cherokees had plucked the thorn from their foot, and were welcome to keep it.”

Peace with  
the Creeks.

The outrages of this Tribe, which had commenced about the time of the attack on Sullivan's Island, were soon extended to the frontier settlements of North Carolina and Virginia. Detachments from the main body passed over the north-mountains, penetrated into the country that stretches along the western foot of the Blue-Ridge, and marking their route with blood and devastation, spread terror and despondency among the defenceless inhabitants.

So much insult and injury called for signal chastisement; it called for a blow, which striking into the hostile hordes, a salutary and permanent awe, should deter them from again engaging in British alliances. Accordingly, the southern States formed a combination for utterly destroying the Indian settlements along their borders. Colonel Williamson, at the head of a respectable force, ad-

Combination  
against  
the Chero-  
kees.

CHAP.  
IX.

Col. Christian makes a peace with the Cherokees.

vanced from South Carolina against the Lower Towns of the Cherokees, and ravaging their whole country, drove them before him, in precipitate flight, to the Wilds of West-Florida, where Stuart opened to them an asylum, and maintained them at the expence of the British government. Against their Middle Towns, Gen. Rutherford from North Carolina, was equally successful. At the same time, their remaining settlements were assailed, to the South by the Georgia militia, and to the North by Col. Christian, with a body of Virginia troops. At the approach of the latter, the hostile Indians rapidly retreated; and Col. Christian, after crossing the Broad and Tennessee rivers, came in view of their Upper Towns. The celerity and boldness of the pursuit struck those savages with astonishment and dismay. From their dark forests, their rugged paths, their extensive morasses, their deep, impetuous rivers, with abrupt, overhanging banks, they had hoped for protection and safety. Disappointed in that hope, and left at the mercy of their pursuers, they sent Oucanastota and three other Chiefs to sue for peace, and, if granted, to settle its conditions. Col. Christian judged that lenity towards a foe now impressively convinced of the strength and power of the adjacent States, would be the most eligible course. Consequently, after making an example of four Indian Towns, under the influence of a virulently inimical Chief, and in one of which, barbarity had been carried so far as to burn alive a white prisoner, he concluded a peace with the suppliant Chiefs on the following conditions. "All captives in their Towns, white or black, were to be delivered up; those belonging to Virginia, by the 10th of February, at the Long-Island; and such as had been taken from the Carolinas or Georgia, at or near Kowee as soon as possible: the Cherokees were, besides, to restore the horses, cattle, and other property taken from the inhabitants, or the value thereof, to be ascertained by Commissioners on both sides. White refugees, if demanded, were to be immediately surrendered to the American States. All matters relating to lands, boundaries, trade, agents, and people residing among the Indians, alliances, marching armies through their country, and building forts therein, were to be entirely submitted to the determination of the State of Virginia, jointly with a number of their own Chiefs, not exceeding five. War was to cease, and peace, harmony, and brotherly affection to take its place. For the full performance of these articles, the Indian negotiators agreed to deliver up fifteen hostages, such as Col. Christian should demand of them, and these were to be annually exchanged for such others as the State of Virginia might require to be put into their hands."\*

\* See Pardie's Virginia Gazette of November 29th, 1776.



CHAP.  
IX.

The expedition against these savage neighbours, beside the advantage of defeating British intrigue, and of neutralizing the murderous, far-dreaded tomahawk, infused into the people of the Southern states a spirit of activity, vigor, and discipline, no less fatal to the designs of Great-Britain than actual victory. At the eve of a portentous crisis, powerful excitements, and situations of uncommon difficulty and peril, were useful. They called forth every latent energy, and furnished the true diagnostics of genius, talent, and courage, assigning to merit of any sort its proper station; and, with rapid strides advancing infant belligerents in the career of military experience and skill.

After the repulse which the British fleet had experienced before Sullivan's Island, General Lee repaired to Georgia. There he continued for some weeks, employing himself in devising and executing schemes for the defence of that State, and in making preparations for an assault upon St. Augustine. He had already proceeded as far as Ogeechee, when the critical situation of the American army, near New-York, called for his return to the North. Congress, placing on his abilities and on his zeal, a well grounded reliance, judged his presence necessary at a point upon which General Howe seemed to have fixed to strike some fatal and decisive blow. We accordingly find him, on the 14th of October, on York-Island, elating the troops with that cheerful confidence which always attends great military talents, and by his seasonable advice preventing them from being enclosed on all sides by the enemy, in the Northern fastnesses of that perilous station. During his stay at Savannah, he had, through the medium of the *Sieur La Plaine*, addressed to the French Minister, a circumstantial developement of the eventual advantages of a political and commercial connection between France and the United States; so intensely bent upon whatever had a tendency to promote the interest which he had espoused, was that ardent, excursive, and soaring genius!

Gen. Lee  
returns to  
the North.

On the 7th of October, the Legislature, now styled the General Assembly of Virginia, met at Williamsburg, in conformity with the appointment of the late Convention. The House of Delegates unanimously elected the venerable Edmund Pendleton, their Speaker; and a similar honor was conferred by the Senate on Archibald Cary, a gentleman equally distinguished for his abilities, integrity, and energy. Thomas Jefferson having, as already noticed, resigned his seat in the General Congress, now acted in the particular Legislature of his native State. In his room, Benjamin Harrison was replaced on the list of Congressional Delegates, and the thanks of the General Assembly for the diligence, skill, and virtue with which he had before discharged the same important trust, afforded him ample solace for his late disappointment.

First meet-  
ing of the  
General  
Assembly of  
Virginia.



CHAP.  
IX.

---

In tracing the proceedings of this first session of the General Assembly of Virginia, after the declaration of Independence, we mean to advert only to its most important acts. These will be found dictated by that efficient wisdom, characterized by that pure and ardent patriotism, which alone could invigorate and support infant liberty, and which will ever be remembered as having constituted the glorious spirit of 1776.

Chief proceedings of that body.

One of the earliest Legislative labours, was the repeal of all acts of Parliament against dissenters. Those acts were numerous, absurd and oppressive. The declaration of Rights had, in May preceding, solemnly proclaimed the free exercise of religion; but statutory shackles on the consciences of men, as well as many restraints and oppressions founded in the common law, still subsisted. The present state of things and opinions loudly called for a prompt and adequate remedy. The fathers of the Colony were members of the Anglican Church, and it had been their avowed and undeviating policy to encourage the doctrines and patronize the Clergy, of that church. As their influence, both in the Legislative and in the executive branch of the Government, was, especially in such matters, extensive and unopposed, severe penalties had, at different periods, been sanctioned and exercised against non-conformists, particularly against Quakers. It is true that the general liberality of opinion diffused throughout Virginia had greatly mitigated, and, it might be said, annulled in practice, most of these penal regulations. A mild and tolerating spirit animated even the Episcopalian Clergy; and dissenters of every denomination were regarded with christian charity and benevolence. Still the dissenters were compelled by law to contribute to the support of the established church; and, at the time under-view, the dissenters constituted, at least, two thirds of the people. The Anglican Clergy, deriving from never failing sources a permanent and fixed revenue, and not merely emoluments commensurate with their individual exertions and usefulness, had insensibly lapsed into that listless indolence which is the usual result of ease and wealth. On the other hand, dissenting ministers, excited by the most powerful stimulants, both temporal and religious, had, with unabated zeal, laboured for the dissemination of their tenets, and the most extensive success had crowned their efforts. By those numerous sectaries, petitions were now presented to the new Legislature from almost every part of the State. In general, the petitions were remarkable for strength of reasoning, and elegance of expression. They breathed a pure and glowing attachment to republican principles; developed in eloquent strains, those overpowering arguments in support of liberty in the abstract, which gain additional force when applied to liberty in con-

cerns of religion ; firmly, yet respectfully, complained of burthens and restrictions inconsistent with equal rights ; and expressed a cheering hope, that, when the many and grievous oppressions of the Parent State had placed America under the necessity of breaking the fetters of tyranny, and of forming independent Governments upon equitable and liberal foundations, non-conformists should be freed from all the incumbrances which a spirit of domination, prejudice or bigotry, had interwoven with the regal system. It was well known, they said, that in the frontier counties, which teemed with an abundant population, the dissenters had borne the heavy burthens of purchasing glebes and supporting the established Clergy, where few Episcopalians could be found either to assist in bearing the expense, or to reap the advantage ; and that throughout the other parts of the country, there were also many thousands of zealous friends and defenders of the state, who, besides the invidious and disadvantageous restrictions to which they had been annually subjected, paid large taxes to support an establishment, from which their consciences and principles obliged them to dissent. Taking other views of the subject, connected with the temporal interests of the community, which a full and unrestrained enjoyment of the rights of conscience could not fail to promote ; with the nature of christianity, whose native excellence required not the aid of state power and support ; with the inherent rights of men, whom no authority but that of the supreme and universal Judge, can direct and bind in the manner of discharging the duty which they owe to their Creator, they earnestly intreated for all religious sects “ protection in the full exercise of their several modes of worship, and exemption from the payment of all taxes for the support of any church whatever, farther than what might be agreeable to their own private choice, or voluntary obligation.”\*

These bold and palpable truths, and the result which they threatened, roused the privileged Clergy from their protracted inertness ; and counter-memorials, in which the *Methodists* joined, as a religious society in communion with the church of England, solicited the continuance of the ecclesiastical establishment, upon principles of justice, wisdom and policy. The *Episcopalian* ministers, it was urged, when they undertook the charge of Parishes in Virginia, depended on the public faith for receiving that compensation for their services, during life, or good behaviour, which the laws of the land promised, a tenure, equally sacred as that by which every man in the state held,

---

\* See, in the Journal of the House of Delegates for 1776, the various petitions of the Dissenters, particularly the memorial from the Presbytery of Hanover.



CHAP.  
IX.

---

and had secured to him his private property. Such of the Clergy as were yet unprovided for, had entered into holy orders with expectations which it would be unjust to frustrate, their early years having been entirely devoted to preparatory acquirements. The Episcopalians did not mean to encroach on the religious rights of any sect or denomination of men ; yet, they conceived a religious establishment in a State, conducive to its peace and happiness. The practice of mankind being influenced by their opinion, and no opinions having a greater tendency to promote virtue, than the doctrines of christianity, it was wise to encourage and support a body of able and virtuous Apostles of those doctrines—Should the church establishment be abolished, and all denominations of christians, placed upon a level, it could not be supposed that, this equality would long continue, or that no attempt would be made for superiority. Much confusion, and probably civil commotions would attend the contest—Finally, an appeal was made for the decision of so important a point, to the sentiments and wishes of the people at large—The final determination of the House, ought, it was asserted, to be deferred until the general sense of the good people of Virginia could be collected on the subject ; and the petitioners concluded by stating, that they had the best reasons to believe that a majority of the citizens desired to see the church establishment continued on that pre-eminent footing, which the practice of many years had consecrated.

After a long and solemn debate on this momentous question, the General Assembly passed an act, annulling all and every act of Parliament, by whatever title known or distinguished, which rendered criminal the maintaining any opinion in matters of religion, forbearing to repair to church, or exercising any mode of worship whatever, or which prescribed punishments for the same. By this act, all societies of dissenters were exempted from contributing to the support and maintenance of the established church. Salaries, however, and arrears of salaries, due to the Episcopalian ministers, to the first day of January following, were secured to them by a levy and assessment on all tithables within the several Parishes. The glebes already purchased, the churches and chapels already built, and other appendages of the established clergy, were saved and reserved for their use. The problematical question of a general assessment, or of voluntary contributions, for religious purposes, was left to the decision of a future Assembly ; and the fixed salaries of the clergy, subsequently to the date above mentioned, were suspended until the end of the next session of Assembly. In October, 1779, this suspension was made perpetual.

Thus was the cause of equal rights and religious liberty considerably advanced. Yet, this was only a compromise



between right and wrong ; for the restrictions and penalties sanctioned by the common law, still remained in force. A singular mixture of civil freedom and religious slavery ! It was reserved for the General Assembly of 1786, to wipe away this stigma, by completely establishing the rights of conscience, and expunging from the code of a free people, every trace of inquisitorial intolerance and absurdity.

When, upon the representations of the Commander in Chief, and the palpable urgency of existing circumstances, the General Congress found it necessary that the armies of the United States should be augmented to 88 battalions, to serve during the continuance of the war, a quota of 15 battalions was assigned to Virginia. Of the 9 battalions before organized, eight were already in the Continental service, and the other had been dissolved by the expiration of the time for which the men composing it had been enlisted. This ninth battalion was ordered to be re-established by new levies ; and six additional battalions to be raised, on Continental pay. Liberal bounties, and other encouragements, promoted this important measure. Such was the conviction of an imperious necessity for military strength and resistance, that recruiting officers from the Carolinas, and Georgia, were permitted to enlist men in the State, under certain restrictions. Particular attention was paid to the organization of a naval force. The row galleys already built were offered to the General Congress for the transportation of the forces on the continental establishment ; more were directed to be constructed, and a similar measure recommended to the neighbouring State of Maryland. Bodies of Infantry and Cavalry, expeditiously raised and admirably officered, received orders to join General Washington with all possible speed. The inhabitants of the State were requested to furnish these troops with as many blankets as they could spare from their families ; and this appeal to the patriotism of a generous people, was cheerfully obeyed. Measures for internal defence and security, were also adopted with salutary vigor and promptitude ;\* fortifications were erected at various important points, and three battalions of infantry raised for garrisoning them ; directions were issued for collecting the copper and brass, scattered through the State, and casting the same into cannon ; deposits for naval stores were established in convenient situations ; an additional number of marines and seamen procured, and the armed vessels belonging to the country ordered to cruize on the enemy. The working of lead mines was also particularly encouraged.

In the midst of these warlike provisions, other objects

---

\* See the acts of this Session—Chapter 13.

CHAP.  
IX.

---

were not forgotten. The Governor was empowered to purchase all the salt that might be imported into the State for six months to come, and to distribute the same amongst the inhabitants of the different counties, in such proportions as their exigencies might require, regard being principally had to such counties as were farthest removed from salt water. Afterwards, the engrossing of this important article was severely prohibited by the Legislature, as well as the exportation of beef, pork, bacon, and other provisions.

The Governor, Patrick Henry, laboured at this time under a severe indisposition. The House of Delegates, and the Senate, acquainted by a letter from him with this unhappy circumstance, owing to which the discharge of his official duties must necessarily be interrupted, readily concurred in a resolution approving of his design to retire into the country for the recovery of his health. By the constitution, it was directed, that, in case of the death, inability, or necessary absence of the Governor, the President of the Council should act as Lieutenant-Governor; but under similar circumstances in respect to the Governor and President of the Council at the same time, no provision was made for the exercise of the executive powers of government. To remedy this defect, it was enacted that, in the event alluded to, the first Privy Counsellor, according to the order of priority in nomination and election, who should be present and able, should act as Lieutenant-Governor, and be vested with all the powers and authority belonging to that office.

In the course of this session, it appeared that one David Rogers, now a member of the Senate, and other injudicious schemers, had, in the preceding summer, formed a plan for erecting a separate government within certain limits, embracing the district of West-Augusta, and for that purpose circulated a memorial at Pittsburg, and other places. Finding their scheme vigorously opposed, the framers of this design did not, however, despair of success. They dispersed advertisements without any signature, directing the people to choose men to meet and consult whether application should be made to Congress for laying off the country within the specified limits, into a new government; or whether they would not immediately proceed to Colonise themselves by their own authority, and send Delegates to Congress, to represent them as the fourteenth link in the American chain. Mr. Rogers, and his associates in this premature plan, refused, in July, to take an oath prescribed by the late Convention, and persisted in using all their influence to make proselytes to their favourite scheme of a new government. The Legislature, loudly reprobating this ill-timed design, instructed the Virginian Delegation in Congress, vigorously to oppose its



accomplishment, in case the contemplated attempt were made; and an act was passed ascertaining the boundary between the county of Augusta, dividing the said district into three distinct counties, Ohio, Yohogania, and Monongalia, and making suitable provisions for the administration of justice, and other civil purposes, in those new counties.

Among the multiplied labours of this active session, we remark the organization of a court of admiralty; certain facilities afforded to persons living in other countries, to dispose of their estates in Virginia; judicious and salutary restraints on the operations of the acts for limitation of actions, and recording deeds in certain cases; humane and efficient provisions for paupers and lunatics; a declaration that tenants of lands and slaves in *taille*\* should hold the same in fee simple; the establishment of naval officers and of auditors of public accounts; a definition of treason, and regulations for the punishment of certain offences. These regulations, threatened with fine and imprisonment, the fine not to exceed the sum of twenty thousand pounds, nor the imprisonment, the term of five years, any person residing, or being within the Commonwealth of Virginia, who should by any word, open deed, or act, advisedly or willingly maintain and defend the authority, jurisdiction, or power of the King, or Parliament of Great-Britain, heretofore claimed and exercised within this Colony, or should attribute any such authority, jurisdiction, or power to the said King or Parliament. The same penalties were denounced against any person, who should, in like manner, endeavour to excite the people to resist the government of the Commonwealth, as by law established, or persuade them to return to a dependence upon the Crown of Great-Britain, or who should excite or raise tumults and disorders in the State, or who should terrify and discourage the people from enlisting into the service of the Commonwealth, or dispose them to favor the enemy. An additional clause in this act prohibited all merchants, traders, and others to import into Virginia from Great-Britain, Ireland, or the British plantations in the West-Indies, any goods, wares, or merchandize whatsoever, except salt from Bermuda and the Bahama-Islands, and such other articles as might be allowed by the General Congress; it further imposed the penalty of forfeiture on all exports from the Commonwealth, except on articles exchanged for salt and other licensed objects.

---

\* This bill suppressing entails, was one of many, framed by that eminent patriot, Thos. Jefferson, with a view to crush forever the eternal antagonism of artificial aristocracy against the rights and happiness of the people. We will fully develop the grand and beneficial plan, when we come to consider the report of the Committee of Revisors.



CHAP.  
IX.

The injurious influence of British merchants, and their frequent opportunities to seduce and corrupt the minds of the people, and to hold correspondence with, and give intelligence to the enemy, induced a resolution of the Legislature, desiring the Governor and Council to cause all such characters to depart the Commonwealth, by immediately putting into execution the statute of the 27th of Edward III. chapter 17.\* against all the natives of Great-Britain, who were partners with, factors, agents, store-keepers, assistant store-keepers, or clerks for any merchant, or merchants in Great Britain, at the time the act of the British Parliament for restraining the trade of America, and seizing Colonial property on the water, took place, except only such of them as had heretofore uniformly manifested a friendly disposition to the American cause, or were attached to the country by having wives or children in it. Those subjects of the British Monarch who should satisfy the Governor and Council that they had not been able to procure other means of departure, might, it was provided, have their passage to any foreign ports in such vessels of the State as the Governor and Council should direct; and all, or any of them, who should be found in the country, after the time respectively allowed them to depart, were to be confined as enemies and prisoners of war.

The Treasurer, R. C. Nicholas, resigned his office, about this time. He assigned two reasons for doing so. Indisposition rendered him unable to undergo the laborious duties of his department, with that alacrity and attention which their importance and a regard to his own health required; and, besides, the new form of government excluded the Treasurer from election to a seat in the Legislature. He would, he said, under such circumstances have offered his resignation sooner, but he had conceived it improper to do so, until the more pressing demands upon the Treasury were satisfied, to prevent any embarrassment in the public affairs, or before he had fully accounted for the large sums of money with which he had been intrusted. The thanks of the House were returned to this meritorious and virtuous officer for his great assiduity, care, and fidelity in the execution of his arduous functions. The country, it was observed, reluctantly yielded to the circumstances which induced his resignation; and to obviate the inconveniencies which his immediate retreat might produce, he was earnestly requested to continue to act as Treasurer until the end of the session. Deeply impressed with such marks of gratitude, approbation, and confidence, and warmly alive to the interests of the community, Mr. Nicholas complied with the desire of the Legislature, observing that, at the expiration of the contemplated term, he

---

\* See Appendix, No. 15.

would surrender the office to his successor, "he trusted with clean hands, and he could assure the House, with empty ones." George Webb was that successor.

Numerous petitions for relief, and other objects, occupied the attention of a Legislature, popular in its essence, and disposed, of course, to extend its benevolent and generous aid to sufferers of all descriptions. The personal estate of Dunmore had been sold, and his lands rented out, by order of the late Convention. The proceeds were applied to the payment of all just claims, public or private, against the fugitive Governor.

The late change introduced in the form of government, had rendered it necessary to make corresponding changes in the laws heretofore in force,\* many of which were inapplicable to the powers of government, as now organized, others were founded on principles heterogeneous to the republican spirit, others which, long before such change, had been oppressive to the people, could yet never be repealed while the regal power continued, and others, having taken their origin while the ancestors of the Virginians remained in Britain, could not be well adapted to their present circumstances of time and place. It was also necessary to introduce certain other laws, which, though proved by the experience of other States to be friendly to liberty and to the rights of mankind, the citizens of Virginia had not heretofore been permitted to adopt. As a work of such magnitude, labour, and difficulty, could not be effected during the short and busy term of a session of Assembly, it was enacted that a Committee, consisting of five persons should be appointed by joint ballot of both Houses (three of whom to be a quorum) who should have full power and authority to revise, after, amend, repeal, or introduce all or any of the said laws, to form the same into bills, and report them to the next meeting of the General Assembly. Suitable provisions were added to render the execution of this important task as prompt and easy as its nature could well allow; and the bills to be prepared and reported by the Committee of Revisors, were to receive, in the usual form, the sanction of both Houses of Assembly, before they acquired the character and authority of laws. Thos. Jefferson, Edmund Pendleton, George Wythe, George Mason, and Thomas Ludwell Lee, were appointed a Committee for that important revision. From the converging rays of legal wisdom which those gentlemen were able to condense into one focus, a pure and refulgent light was expected, which would dispel the inauspicious darkness in which the Virginian code was then immersed. We will

---

\* See preamble to the act for the revision of the laws, in the Appendix to the Journal of the House of Delegates, for 1776.

CHAP.  
IX.

---

have occasion, in the sequel of our narrative, to notice the result of this noble and pre-eminently useful scheme. The co-operation of George Wythe appearing essential, the patriotic Mann Page, of Spottsylvania, was elected his successor in the Congressional Delegation.

The decisive step of independence, and the firm attitude assumed by the new republic, opened, it was thought, a favorable prospect for foreign alliances. It was understood that the Members of the French Cabinet, eager to renew the contest for maritime superiority, and to humble British arrogance, viewed with secret exultation the resistance of America, and wished to seize on this advantageous opportunity for a successful war with England. Listening to the dictates of policy, the American Congress resolved to appoint three Commissioners to the Court of France; and Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Thos. Jefferson, were honoured with their choice. The following letter from Mr. Jefferson to the President of Congress, explains the reasons which induced him to decline the appointment.

WILLIAMSBURG, Oct'r. 11th, 1776.

HONORABLE SIR,

Your favour of the 30th, together with the resolutions of Congress, of the 26th ultimo, came safe to hand. It would argue great insensibility in me, could I receive with indifference, so confidential an appointment from your Body. My thanks are a poor return for the partiality they have been pleased to entertain for me. No cares for my own person, nor yet for my private affairs, would have induced one moment's hesitation to accept the charge. But circumstances very peculiar in the situation of my family, such as neither permit me to leave, nor to carry it, compel me to ask leave to decline a service so honorable, and, at the same time, so important to the American cause. The necessity under which I labour, and the conflict I have undergone for three days, during which I could not determine to dismiss your messenger, will, I hope, plead my pardon with Congress; and I am sure there are too many of that body to whom they may with better hopes confide this charge, to leave them under a moment's difficulty in making a new choice. I am, sir, with the most sincere attachment to your honorable Body, and the great cause they support, their and your

Most obedient humble servant,

THO'S JEFFERSON.

Dr. Arthur Lee, whom his *Monitor's Letters*, in vindication of Colonial rights, his subsequent services as Agent for Virginia in England, and his ardent devotion to the American cause, justly recommended to the public esteem,



was then appointed, in the room of Mr. Jefferson ; and he joined his colleagues, Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane, at Paris, in December following.

CHAP.  
IX.

When, towards the close of this session, the Legislature of Virginia beheld the awful and critical situation of America—the enemy in possession of New York—General Washington precipitately retreating through the Jerseys, before an overwhelming force—and the salvation of the country, depending next to providential aid, on some extraordinary measures and efforts—several of its members, actuated, it is thought, by laudable intentions, but struck with causeless, or at least, exaggerated alarm, and misapplying the example of the Roman republic, in times of extreme danger, proposed and advocated a step, in itself more formidable, and eventually more fatal to the liberties and happiness of the people, than the British arms. This was no less than the surrender into a single hand of every power, legislative, executive, and judiciary, civil and military of life and of death, over the persons and the properties of the citizens ; nothing less than the substitution of a despotie in lieu of a limited monarch ; nothing less, in short, than the appointment of a *Dictator* ! Strange blindness ! unaccountable infatuation ! where was the constitutionality of the measure ? or its necessity ? or its expediency ? But, it would ill become us to offer our feeble remarks on this momentous subject, after the eloquent, nervous, and overpowering developement of it, which the warning voice of a venerable sage and Patriot\* has solemnly impressed on the minds of his country-men. With him we are willing to acquit the consciences, whilst we impeach the judgment, of those who fell into an error so palpable, and so fraught with peril and mischief ; with him we experience increased surprise and indignation, when we see the same proposition repeated in June, 1781, and wanting only a few votes of being passed ; and with him we are firmly convinced, that if in either case, promotes of a design so vitally fatal, supposed in the people such resignation as to suffer themselves to be delivered over to the rods and hatchet of a Dictator, they totally mistook their character ! We have not been able to probe to the quick, of this political ulcer ; Mr. Jefferson who had laboured in the common cause with the men who advocated the obnoxious measure, and often proved the purity of their principles,† impeaches their judgment only, as before observed. Let it be so ! Let no secret putridity of heart, and profligacy of principles, be suspected in a considerable portion of “ that plurality, in whose hands the

\* See Jefferson's notes on Virginia, Query XIII, Constitution, &c.

† See notes on Virginia ; *ubi Supra*.

CHAP.  
IX.

---

people had placed the powers of Government, to prevent the corrupt will of any one man from oppressing them in future!" It appears, from concurring reports, that this dictatorial scheme produced, in the Legislature, unusual heat and violence. The members who favored, and those who opposed it, walked the streets on different sides. The venerable Speaker of the Senate, Archibald Cary, manifested on the occasion, a republican stunness, which places him by the side of Cato, or even Brutus.

That Mr. Henry was the person in view for the Dictatorship, is well ascertained; and the bold, impassioned, and energetic temper of the Speaker of the Senate, justifies a belief of whatever is connected with republican firmness and decision.

Although the dictatorial plan was relinquished, it appeared advisable to adopt certain measures to the evident and urgent necessity of the times. Additional powers were, therefore, conferred on the Governor and Council, for a limited period, for the most vigorous and effectual means to repel the invasions of the enemy. The Governor was fully "authorized and empowered, by and with the advice and consent of the Privy Council, from henceforward, until ten days after the meeting of the next General Assembly, to carry into execution such requisitions as might be made to the Commonwealth of Virginia by the American Congress, for the purpose of encountering or repelling the enemy, to order the three battalions on the pay of the Commonwealth of Virginia, to march (if necessary) to join the continental army, or to the assistance of any of the United States; to call forth any and such greater military force, as they should judge requisite, either by embodying companies or regiments of Volunteers, or by raising additional battalions, appointing, and commissioning their proper officers, and to direct their operations within the State, under the command of the continental Generals, or other officers, according to their respective ranks; or order them to march to join and act in concert with the continental army, or the troops of any of the American States—and to provide for their pay, supply of provisions, arms, and other necessaries, at the charge of the Commonwealth, by drawing on the Treasurer for the money that might be necessary from time to time. The Treasurer was, accordingly, authorized to pay such warrants out of the public money which might be in his hands, and if any deficiency should occur, the general Assembly were to make ample provision for it." A concluding resolution ran in the following words:

"Resolved, That our Delegates be instructed to recommend to the consideration of Congress, whether it may not be necessary and expedient, in the present dangerous and critical situation of America, in order to give vigour, expedition, and secrecy to our military measures, to invest

CHAP.  
IX.

the Commander in Chief of the American forces, with more ample and extensive powers for conducting the operations of the war ; and that they will earnestly exhort the different Legislatures of the United American States to adopt the most speedy and effectual methods for calling their military force into action, and co-operating with the Generals of the American armies."

We shall soon have occasion to remark the acquiescence of Congress in this and other salutary, energizing recommendations ; let us now rapidly trace the important events, which had brought in their rear the awful crisis, here alluded to.

We have seen General Howe possessing himself of Staten Island, and there successively reinforced by British and German troops, a considerable body of which arrived with his brother, Admiral Howe. Whilst off the coast of New-England, the latter sent by a flag to several of the former royal Governors a circular letter, explanatory of the objects of his mission, together with a declaration which he desired them to promulgate, as early as possible, in order that all persons might be immediately informed of his Majesty's gracious intentions." The whole was transmitted by General Washington to Congress, and by that Body ordered to be published in the several Gazettes "that the good people of the United States might be informed of what nature were the Commissioners, and what the terms with the expectation of which the Court of Great-Britain had endeavoured to amuse and disarm them ; and that the few who still remained suspended by a hope, founded either in the justice or moderation of the Ministers, might be convinced that the valor alone of their country was to save its liberties." At a subsequent period, another flag was sent to New-York with a letter from Lord Howe for Mr. Washington. The American General, naturally was above the punctilios of etiquette ; but where disrespect to his station was evidently intended, it became him to press on the supercilious foe, a proper regard to the decorums of official intercourse. He therefore refused to receive his Lordship's communication, until formally addressed. This produced an interview between him, and the British Adjutant-General, Colonel Paterson : the subject of the conference chiefly related to the complaints of prisoners on both sides. Considering the contest as a war against rebels, the servants of the Crown had not conceived themselves bound by the ordinary laws of war, in respect to American prisoners ; and this had, in some instances, called for retaliation. We will have occasion to observe the systematic and inflexible course of cruelties exercised in this way by the British during the three first years of the war. Towards the close of the conference, Patterson happened to observe that the Commissioners were vested with

Military  
events to the  
Northward.



CHAP.  
IX.

ample powers. "Their powers, replied General Washington, are only to grant pardons. They who have committed no fault, want no pardon. The Americans are only defending what they think their indisputable rights." These sentiments were in perfect accordance with the feelings of all real Americans. The proffered clemency was generally considered as a haughty combination of insult with injury. The British Commissioners, relinquishing this hopeless effort, now recurred to arms. Powerful motives stimulated them to action. It appears that the great plan of the enemy, for 1776, had been simultaneously to strike at the heart, and at the extremities of United America, with a view to distract her councils, divide her strength, and thereby disarm her resistance. But numberless obstacles opposed the execution of a plan, in itself no less plausible than formidable. The attack on the South was tardy, ill-conducted, unsuccessful. On the North, notwithstanding the retrograde movement of the daring band, whose valour had shaken the walls of Quebec, the genius of the new-born Republic still maintained an obstinate struggle for the mastery of the Lakes. Success at the middle point became, therefore, the more important. A hope yet prevailed that Carleton, penetrating to the banks of the Hudson, would finally be able to effect a junction with the central army, and thus intercept all communication between the Eastern, the Middle, and the Southern States. Independently of this contemplated junction, it was advisable to secure the possession of Long-Island, whose fertility promised abundant supplies, and of New-York, whence irruptions could easily be made into various parts of New-England, into the Jerseys, and even into Pennsylvania, whose metropolis would be an important conquest. A comparative view of the rival forces swelled the expectations of the British General. He had under his command a body of about 30,000 excellent troops, well armed, well supplied, impatient for action, and supported by a numerous fleet. On the other hand, Washington scarcely counted one half of that number fit for service;\* and his extensive posts prevented a concentration; nor, if inbred valor, and love of country be excepted, were his unexperienced, undisciplined troops possessed of those qualifications, or of those advantages, which presage and ensure victory. The defective organization of the American army is strongly depicted in the letters of its Chief to Congress, who, soon after, applied a partial remedy. In this posture of affairs, General Howe, towards the latter end of August, landed his army on Long-Island, between the two small Towns of Utrecht and Gravesend. No op-

---

\* Gen. Heath says 40,000, officers included—of whom 10,000 were sick. Other estimates are much below.

position was offered at that point. The Americans confined their attention to works erected, under the direction of General Greene, in a more Northerly part of the Island, and nearly opposite to New-York, for whose protection they were intended. From the station taken by the British, after their landing, these works were separated by a chain of hills, over which passes, easily defensible, had been opened. Greene happening, at this time, to labour under a severe indisposition, General Sullivan was substituted in his room. Brave, zealous, and active, but deficient in watchfulness, Sullivan by an unaccountable oversight, suffered those important passes to remain without adequate guards; and, on the 26th of August, the British, advancing in several columns, surprised and defeated him, with a loss, on his part, of between 400 and 500 killed, and nearly 1100 prisoners, among which were Lord Sterling, and himself. On both sides, great courage was displayed; and, even in the confusion attendant on a surprise, the Americans extorted from the enemy the praise of intrepidity and heroic firmness; but this unfortunate affair compelled the evacuation of Long Island, which was providentially effected, on the 30th of August, without any additional loss. Lieutenant General Heister, with a brigade of Hessians, immediately upon this retreat, occupied the heights of Brooklyn, and the rest of the royal army took other advantageous positions.

Elated with this first success, and building sanguine hopes on its effects, Lord Howe hastened to renew his pacific overtures. By General Sullivan, now a prisoner on parole, he informed Congress that, although he could not at present treat with them, as a political Body, still he was desirous to have a conference with some of the members whom he would, in that case, consider as private gentlemen—that he and his brother were invested with full powers to compromise the dispute between Great Britain and America, upon terms, the obtaining of which, had delayed him near two months in England, and prevented his reaching America before the Declaration of Independence. That he wished for a compact before a decisive blow was struck, and whilst no compulsion yet existed on either side—that, in case such a compact should be determined upon, the authority of Congress would be acknowledged, since, without such acknowledgment, that compact could be valid!

Congress could not, as the Representatives of free and Independent States, send any members of their Body to confer with Lord Howe in their private characters. Yet, even desirous of establishing peace on reasonable terms, they appointed Dr. Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge, a Committee “to know if his Lordship had any authority to treat for that purpose with persons autho-

CHAP. rized by Congress, and to hear such propositions as he  
IX. should think fit to make respecting the same."

---

The desired interview took place upon Staten Island, opposite to Amboy, where his Lordship received and entertained the members of the Congressional Committee with the utmost politeness, but in the character of private gentlemen. Waving the discussion of this point, they declared themselves ready to hear whatever he might have to propose. His Lordship then widely expatiated upon the wish of the King and his Ministers to render the British Government easy to America; with intimations that, in case the Colonies should return to their allegiance and obedience to that Government, they would cause the offensive acts of Parliament to be *revised*, and the instructions to Governors to be *reconsidered*, so as to remove any just causes of complaint. The Committee retraced the steps which had led America to Independence, a measure founded in the will of the people, and which it was not in the power of Congress to annul—they assured his Lordship of the inclination of United America to peace, and of their willingness to enter into any treaty with Britain, that might be advantageous to both countries. Upon this, Lord Howe observed, that there was no prospect of an accommodation, and put an end to the conference. Thus it became evident that the powers of the Commissioners merely extended to granting pardons, and declaring America, or any part of it, to be in the King's peace, upon submission. This certitude dispelled the charm, broke the talisman, which promises of peace and reconciliation still preserved with many. We may infer the general sentiment, on the subject of this abortive measure of the British Commissioners, from the following passage in the second number of the *American Crisis*, addressed to Lord Howe by the celebrated author of *Common Sense*.

"It was beneath the dignity of the American Congress to pay any regard to a message, that, at best, was a genteel affront, and had much of the ministerial complexion of tampering with private persons; and which might probably have been the case, had the gentlemen, who were deputed on that business, possessed that easy kind of virtue, which an English courtier is so truly distinguished by.—Your request, however, was complied with; for honest men are naturally more tender of their civil, than their political fame. The interview ended as every sensible man thought it would; for your Lordship knows as well as the writer of this crisis, that it is impossible for the King of England to promise the repeal or even the revival of any acts of Parliament; wherefore, on your part you had nothing to say, more than to request, in the room of demanding, the entire surrender of the continent; and then, if it was complied with, to promise that the inhabitants should



escape with their lives. This was the upshot of the conference ; you informed the conferees that you were two months in soliciting these powers. What powers ? for, as Commissioner, you have none. If you mean the power of pardoning, it is an oblique proof that your King was determined to sacrifice every thing before him ; and that you were two months in dissuading him from his purpose. Another evidence of his savage obstinacy ! From your own account of the matter, we may justly draw these two conclusions : first, that you serve a tyrant ; and secondly, that never was a Commissioner sent on a more foolish errand than yourself. This plain language may, perhaps, sound uncouthly to an ear vitiated by courtly refinements, but words are made for use, and the fault lies in deserving them."

Again laying aside the barren olive branch, the Commissioners resumed the sword. Rapidly surveying the military transactions of that eventful period, we see British ships sailing up the Hudson and East river, in spite of the obstructions and Forts intended to prevent their passage—An hostile force lands on New York Island,\* and takes the City, which the Americans had prudently evacuated—an accidental fire destroys nearly one-fourth of it, a few days after—the Americans slowly retreat to the northern parts of the Island, and thence to White-Plains—the enemy pursues them, seeking with keenness a general engagement—a partial action and sharp skirmishes only, take place, in which the disgrace incurred by part of the army upon the landing of the enemy at Frog's Neck, is amply redeemed—Unable to force Washington to a decisive struggle, Howe suddenly marches his troops towards King's Bridge, and threatens Fort Washington, yet occupied by the Americans on the left side of the Hudson. Washington crosses that river, and reaches Fort Lee, in time to witness the fall of the Fort honoured with his name. On the 16th of September it surrenders to the enemy, with its stores, ordnance, and about 3000 prisoners, who are sent to perish in Prison-ships and sugar-houses, in New York. Many of its brave defenders were pierced with the bayonet of the merciless Hessian—Washington saw it—and tears are said to have bedewed his venerable cheeks—He wept over his men—he wept over his own fatal acquiescence in well-meant, but erroneous counsels—Soon after, Fort Lee, on the opposite bank, is menaced with a similar fate, but a timely retreat over the Hackinsack saves the garrison—leaving a division of the army at North-Castle, under Lee's command ;

---

\* It was in one of the skirmishes which preceded the capture of New York, that the brave Major Leitch of Virginia, was mortally wounded, whilst fighting with the utmost gallantry.

CHAP.  
IX.

and another at Peek's Kill, under General Heath—Washington retreats to Newark, with about 3500 men. A strong body of the enemy, headed by Cornwallis, hangs on his rear, and again courts a decisive action. But unwilling, at so critical a juncture, to stake the liberties of his country on the hazard of a single day, sacrificing personal fame to public weal, the commander in Chief retires to Brunswick. There he had cherished a hope to be enabled, by the promised reinforcements, to make a stand, and to limit the progress of the pursuing foe, to the banks of the Rariton—That hope is frustrated; the temporary enlistments of most of his troops expire—and a new retreat is the unavoidable consequence. On the 4th of December, he reaches Trenton; quits it on the 7th, and crosses the Delaware.

This retreat, was, at the time, censured by the rash and the prejudiced—it was thought pusillanimous, disgraceful; it is now justly esteemed wise and glorious—and posterity will confirm the opinion. The American army consisted, at one time, of less than 1000; at no time, of more than 4000 men. The enemy was, at least, 8000 strong, exclusive of a numerous artillery and light-horse. Yet, this handful of Americans slowly retreated above 80 miles, without losing a dozen men. Had Washington suffered his martial spirit to overcome his prudence; had he closed with the appeal of the enemy, he would have hurled his army, himself, and his country, into irretrievable ruin. The immense responsibility now resting upon him, awed, without shaking his noble mind. He is said to have entertained thoughts, if reduced to extremities, of retiring to Augusta county in Virginia, and, if overpowered even there, of crossing the farther Alleghanies, and seeking in the then wild regions of the West, security and Liberty. In the mean time, succours were urged from all sides.—Yet, they slowly came. With about 3000 men, Lee advanced in the rear of the British; but his usual alertness and vigilance seemed to have forsaken him. On the 13th of December, he was unfortunately surprised by a party of British light horse\*—an event keenly felt in the present crisis! The enemy boasted of having taken the “American Palladium;” and their triumph was equal to the mortification of

---

\* Brigadier General Adam Stephen, then with General Washington, after describing the cruelties and brutalities of the enemy in the Jerseys, and the perilous situation of America, if an army be not promptly raised, says in a letter dated, “Camp on Delaware, 30 miles from Philadelphia, December, 1776.”

“General Lee had the misfortune to be taken prisoner on the 13th inst. He had sauntered about 3 1-2 miles from his army, lodged the night before at a house, recommended to him by a Col. Vanhorn, a person in the enemy's service, who is appointed to sign pardons on the people's submission; and stayed at the place until 10 o'clock on the 13th, when 50 light horsemen, supposed to be detached by advice of Vanhorn, came to the house, and carried him off. He had 13 men of a guard, but they were straggling and absent, except 3.

the Patriots. The division under Heath, was proceeding to join General Washington; but alarmed at the abandonment of the important passes over the Highlands, the Convention of New York intreated the Commander in Chief, to order that protecting body to their former station at Peek's Kill. The request was granted; and Heath retracing his steps, intrenched himself again to the North of New York, where he proved eminently useful in diverting part of the enemy's force from the overwhelming plan directed against the main army.

Dark and gloomy was now the aspect of American affairs. Yet, neither Congress, nor Washington, nor any real friend of the cause threatened with irretrievable ruin, despaired of the Commonwealth, or departed from that firm and dignified attitude which became the supporters of a nation's rights. The Commander in Chief tracing these early disasters to their real source, the defective organization of the army, with austere, but salutary candour, pointed out the evils which so loudly called for efficient remedies. His letters complained of temporary enlistments, laxity of discipline, inadequacy of pay, and, of course, rapacity and malversation, scantiness, if not total want of medical aid, inattention to proper appointments of officers, neglect of the decorums of grade, and other minor evils. To temporary enlistments, he chiefly ascribed the present military calamities. The transient service of the militia also afflicted him. He knew that the events of a campaign, and the exigencies which they bring in their rear, cannot with precision be adapted to any terms of limited service. At a most critical juncture, at a moment which required systematic immobility, he saw his army undulating, disorganized, and almost annihilated.—Let the rulers of the American empire, never loose sight of this awful fact! If the rational jealousy and well-grounded fears of Freemen, forbid, in time of peace, standing military establishments, whenever a nation is called to arms, to enforce, or defend her natural or political rights, common sense, self-salvation, and a thousand other powerful motives, demand that regular, commensurate, cotemporaneous armies should be created and maintained. Like other arts, the art of war requires an apprenticeship; and the protracted duration of most contests between modern governments, necessitates symmetry and continuity of warlike measures—persevering and patient constancy—mechanical, rather than impulsive courage—all which are scarcely compatible with short enlistments.—As to the militia, the excitements of home, wives, children, and other endearing and animating influences, must naturally render the citizens who compose it, a suitable and efficient force for local and momentary action. But the mass of operations attendant on



CHAP.  
IX.

a formidable war, ought to devolve on men who possess something beside patriotic ardour, and enthusiastic devotion—We mean, that precision, skill, patience, and self-denial, which are the chief ingredients in the composition of the consummate soldier of modern times.

Surrounded with so many dangers, Washington had urged successors even from Schuyler and Gates; but these were distant, uncertain, precarious. Sullivan, now exchanged, took, after Lee's capture, the command of his division; and seasonably joined the commander-in-Chief. Obedient to the voice of the fathers of the republic, animated by an affectionate address from General Mifflin, alarmed for Washington and their country, the militia of the metropolis, and every other part of Pennsylvania, flocked round the standard of liberty, and stationed at the principal points on the right bank of the Delaware, presented to the foe an impenetrable bulwark.

In the eagerness of pursuit, the British had attempted to cross that stream; the removal of all the boats to the opposite side, saved the American army and Philadelphia. Intoxicated with this rapid success, and fearless of an attack, the enemy spread themselves through the Jerseys in multiplied and distant parties. With calm and secret exultation, the American chief receives the intelligence of their rash cantonments. "Now" he exclaims, "is the time to clip their wings." Three simultaneous attacks are concerted; but one only succeeds. Washington, assisted by Sullivan, Greene and Knox, crosses the Delaware on the night of the 25th December. No difficulty, no inclemency of weather, can stop him and his brave troops—They surprise a considerable detachment of the enemy lying in Trenton; and immediately recross the Delaware with the trophies of their victory; these were about 1000 prisoners, 6 pieces of brass cannon, 12 drums, 4 standards, 1200 small arms, 6 waggons, a number of swords, caps, &c. This bold and successful manœuvre, like a ray of genial light breaking through the darkness of a lowering sky, cheers, re-animates the public mind. It leads to more extensive and equally fortunate operations. The American army, again crossing the Delaware in various divisions, concentrates at Trenton. On the 2d of January, 1777, the enemy, bent on decisive action, assemble, at the same place, almost the whole of their force. The two armies are now separated only by an inconsiderable stream—and the dawn of the next day is expected to witness the mighty shock, which will determine the fate of America. Prudence forbids an engagement, on which such momentous results depend, with an adversary far superior in numbers and discipline. Again recurring to stratagem, Washington orders a great number of fires to be kept up during the night, so as to deceive the enemy; and, by a circuitous

CHAP.  
IX.

route, marches to Princeton, which he reaches about sunrise, and where he defeats three regiments of the enemy, killing more than 100 of their men, and taking near 300 prisoners. But in this action fell a gallant son of Virginia, the heroic and amiable Brigadier General Mercer. He fell universally regretted; and the manner of his death called for vengeance, as well as for sympathy: he was bayoneted in three places, and expired in the bosom of victory and with still brighter anticipations for the cause which he adored. The tears of a grateful people embalmed his memory; and his fame will live as long as that sacred Independence, in whose support he bled and died \* Improving this advantage, Washington would have immediately advanced upon Brunswick, where the stores and baggage of the whole British army were deposited, together with several American prisoners, among whom was General Lee; but the excessive fatigue of the troops, prevented the execution of this design. and Morristown was occupied as a safe and convenient station. Soon after this happy enterprize, General Maxwell struck the enemy at Elizabeth town; and took upwards of 100 prisoners, with a large quantity of baggage. These repeated successes forced the British to abandon Newark, and to concentrate their lines within the narrow compass of Brunswick and Amboy, whence a communication with New York was opened by water. Even there, they scarcely thought themselves secure. Their foraging parties were frequently and successfully attacked by the American troops; and the inhabitants of the adjacent country, exasperated by their cruelty, lust and rapaciousness, wreaked implacable vengeance on every straggler.

On entering the Jerseys, the British Chiefs issued, as they had done in the state of New York, a proclamation, offering protection to those who would rally round the royal standard, and take the oaths of allegiance within 60 days, assuring the people, at the same time, that the obnoxious laws would be revised. This proclamation and these assurances produced here, as in the Islands, a general disposition among the inhabitants, to save themselves by submission. It was then that orders were issued to the British troops, forbidding plunder and other injuries.—These orders were not obeyed. The German mercenaries considered themselves as at free quarters in an enemy's country. Assuming the merit of all that had been done, they insisted

---

\* Congress decreed Monuments to Warren and Mercer, and gave their families just marks of gratitude. On the 27th of June, 1777, a resolution of the House of Delegates in Virginia, further recommended to the parental care of Congress, the families of the illustrious Brigadier General Mercer, and the gallant Major Andrew Leitch, who had so bravely distinguished himself in York Island.—(See Journal of the House of Delegates, for 1777, June 26.)

CHAP.  
IX.

upon enjoying the fruits of their fancied conquest. In vain Howe remonstrated—badly paid by their respective masters, they sought for indemnity in indiscriminate plunder—The promises made to them of settlements in the country—the artful misrepresentations of the servants of the crown, who had painted to those Foreigners, the Americans, as totally uncivilized, and waging a war of extermination—their own ideas of the heinousness of resistance to royalty—the difference of language, and, above all, brutal, unrestrained passions, excite them to deeds, at which humanity recoils with disgust and horror; and their example was soon imitated by the British. “The rapacity of the enemy,” said Governor William Livingston, to the Council and general Assembly of New Jersey, in his address of the 25th of February, 1777, “was boundless—their rapine indiscriminate—and their barbarity unparalleled. They have plundered friends and foes. Effects capable of division, they have divided; such as were not, they have destroyed. They have warred upon decrepid age; warred upon defenceless youth. They have committed hostilities against the professors of literature, and the ministers of religion: against public records and private monuments; against books of improvement and papers of curiosity; and against the arts and sciences. They have butchered the wounded asking for quarter: mangled the dying, weltering in their blood; refused the dead the rites of sepulture: suffered prisoners to perish for want of sustenance; violated the chastity of women: disfigured private dwellings of taste and elegance: and in the rage of impiety and barbarism, *profaned edifices, dedicated to Almighty God!*”

These excesses, deplorable, as they were, ultimately redounded to the public good. They kindled a flame of indignation, never to be extinguished; and they opened the eyes of many of the disaffected, who had been made to believe, that their zeal in abetting the royal cause, would exempt them from being involved in the common calamity, and yet were among the first victims of Hessian rapacity and violence. When the scene was reversed, when the British were, in their turn, compelled to retreat, sufferers of all parties rose, to a man, to revenge personal injuries and particular oppressions. The strong sought retribution in blood; the weak acted as spies: so that the situation of the British, at Brunswick and Amboy, became distressing, to a degree exceeding description.

Another feature in the conduct of this war, equally wanton, cruel and impolitic, on the part of the British, and which no less efficiently reacted against themselves, was their barbarous treatment of American prisoners. To this, we have already alluded; but the interest of humanity, and of public morals, requires a fuller view of the subject.



It is a trite remark that, as no quarrels are more virulent than those which occur, in private life, between friends or relations, so no wars are marked with more rancour, ferocity, and vindictive feeling, than civil wars. It is in fact, the same principle developing itself on a larger scale. In the present case, the truth of this remark was fatally evinced by the General and systematic rigour of the British towards prisoners, and by the occasional retaliations of the Americans. The British, entering upon hostilities with ideas of insulted supremacy on one side, and of guilt and rebellion on the other, gave to the war, in its commencement, and indeed, though in a less degree after Burgoyne's surrender, through the whole period of its duration,\* a character of severity unexampled in the civilized World. Their successes in New York and the Jerseys afforded their ill humours full leisure to break out without restraint. Gage in Boston and Prescott in Canada, had furnished Howe with precedents of that angry and revengeful spirit, which doubles the calamities incident to war. Though he did not entirely follow their example, tho' he neither threw a Lovel into a common jail of felons, nor sent an Ethan Allen, loaded with chains, to England; Yet he did not prevent, if he ordered not, the insulting and cruel usage offered in New-York to Major Otho Holland Williams, and his fellow prisoners of war, in open violation of the articles solemnly stipulated for the surrender of Fort Washington;† he did not prevent, if he devised not, their confinement in waste houses, sugar houses, and prison-ships, where the seeds of

\* For the proof of this, see the account of the treatment of prisoners, after the surrender of Charleton, in Ramsay's History of the Revolution in S. Carolina, vol. 2.

† "The prisoners," says General Heath, in his Memoirs, "were marched to New York; where, being crowded in prisons and sugar-houses, they fell sick, and daily died in a most shocking manner. It was common, on a morning, for the car-men to come and take away the bodies for burial, by *cart-loads*! O, ye officers of the Provost! to whatever nation or people you belong, when the unfortunate of your fellow-men are thus committed to your charge, clothe yourselves with humanity, and soothe the distress as far as in your power; for, by this, you will secure a better reward than your present wages! And you, who have the honor to command armies, when your victories have filled provosts and prisons, think it not beneath you to visit the prisons, that, with your own eyes, you may see the state of your prisoners! for, such *visits* the great *Captain of your salvation*, has said, shall be considered as made to himself; while it also gives you a name among men closely allied to that of the conqueror. The truly brave are always humane."

*Heath's Memoirs, page 87.*

To this feeling *tirade* of the humane and pious Heath, we devoutly say, AMEN; especially when it is asserted, upon the authority of Mr. Boudinot, American Commissary of prisoners, that in one prison-ship alone, called the Jersey, which was anchored near New York, *eleven thousand* American prisoners died in eighteen months; almost the whole of them from the barbarous treatment of being stifled in a crowded hold, with infected air, and poisoned with unwholesome food."

*See Barlow's notes to Columbiad, note 37.*

CHAP. death were inhaled with a stagnant poisonous air, or taken  
 IX. in with putrid, infected nourishment, furnished in scanty allowance—scarcely sufficient to support struggling nature; he did not prevent, if he did not sanction, the low scurrility, the maddening taunts of a brutal soldiery, a thousand times worse than physical sufferings.—It was under his immediate authority that General Lee was treated as a deserter, a traitor, and closely confined as such, until retaliation was awfully denounced on the persons of Lieutenant Colonel Campbell and five Hessian officers. It was of these mournful, incontrovertible facts that Washington complained in his correspondence with General Howe.—It was these facts, and the certitude that necessity alone had drawn from America, correspondent severity in a few prominent cases, which induced General Gates repeatedly to say, “had General Howe seen to it, that the prisoners and Jersey inhabitants, when subdued, were treated with humanity and kindness, it would have been all up with the Americans.” To this impolitic treatment of disarmed enemies, the cursory view which we are now to take of the events on and near the Lakes, will present an honorable and consoling exception, in the conduct of Sir Guy Carleton, towards his prisoners.

After the retreat of the Americans from Canada, and their abandonment of offensive operations against that province, it became their main object, on the side of the North, to prevent their pursuers from penetrating to the Hudson, and there effecting the intended junction with the central army. Of the march of the British over land, with the heavy and cumbersome accompaniments of artillery, ammunition and baggage, inseparable from modern armies, there was little apprehension, as the intermediate country was overspread with forests and marshes, alone sufficient to check their progress. To the mastery of the Lakes, therefore, their attention was essentially directed. Notwithstanding the deplorable deficiency in cannon, in the materials for ship-building, and in the necessary artificers, the exertions of Schuyler and Gates created a naval armament of about 15 vessels on Lake Champlain. So great was the importance of unshaken resolution and invincible courage in the contemplated service, that Arnold was appointed to the command of this Flotilla, although his character had considerably suffered in the retreat from Canada, on the score of integrity. Carleton, on the other hand, with more than correspondent energy, and in the short space of three months, completed a much superior fleet, manned with seven hundred skilful and hardy seamen. Steering, without delay, in quest of Arnold, the British Commander challenged him to battle. Maugre the disparity of force, Arnold closed with the appeal, and maintained a long and warm contest. Fortunately for the American Flotilla, some of the enemy's largest vessels were,

CHAP.  
IX.

by an adverse wind, prevented from taking any share in the action. Night separated the combatants, and the British hoped to annihilate their antagonists the next day, October 5th. Arnold, conscious of his inferiority, attempted to elude the foe, and reach Ticonderoga; for, the ravages of the small pox, and other causes, had induced Gates to abandon Crown Point, and retire there. He was pursued, overtaken, and brought to action. During about two hours he fought with desperate courage. But successful resistance was impossible. Some of his vessels escaped to the Fort; one only struck her colors; the intrepid Arnold, determined not to fall into the hands of the British, ran the rest on shore, and blew them up, after landing their crews. Crown Point, where a small detachment had been left, was then evacuated, and burnt. The whole American force, in that quarter, was now concentrated at Ticonderoga, a post, which it was intended to defend to the last extremity. An attack was hourly expected; but the formidable attitude of the place, together with the lateness of the season, induced the British commander to leave the fortress unmolested for the present, and to retire into Canada in search of winter quarters. This step, relieving the apprehensions of the Americans on that side, enabled General Gates to march, with a considerable detachment of his army, to the assistance of Washington. On the 20th of December, he joined the Pennsylvania troops. The humanity of Guy Carleton, both in Canada and on the Lakes, in respect to his prisoners, his constant efforts to mitigate the barbarities of Indian warfare, and his final dismissal of the savage allies, whose aid he had been urged by the ministers to associate with the British arms, have endeared his name to every feeling heart.

During the full tide of British success in the Jerseys, a large detachment of the royal forces under General Clinton, assisted by Sir P. Parker, with a powerful squadron of men of war, had occupied Rhode Island, and blocked up, at Providence, the American Flotilla, commanded by Ezechieel Hopkins, and, together with it, numerous private armed vessels.

Invasion of  
Rhode Is-  
land.

The maritime exertions of America deserve the notice of the Historian. Hitherto we have adverted only to the activity of the Virginian and North-Eastern cruizers, but naval success had not been confined to them. Several causes had induced and favoured the creation of a small, yet efficient navy. These chiefly were the necessity of protecting an extensive sea-coast—the prospect of easy and advantageous excursions against British merchantmen—the abundance of materials for naval construction—and the multitude of expert ship-wrights and seamen, whom the stagnation of foreign commerce, and of the fisheries left without employment. In the Colonies possessed of localities propitious to navigation, industry and enterprize,

American  
successes  
at sea.



CHAP.  
IX

had been successfully exerted. Early in 1776, America saw her flag waving on the *Alfred* of 32 guns, the *Columbus* of an equal force, the *Andrew Doria* of 16 guns, the *Sebastian Cabot* of 14, and the *Providence* of 12 guns. To these were added 13 galleys, the *Washington*, the *Dickenson*, the *Chatham*, the *Cambden*, the *Burke*, the *Effingham*, the *Bull-Dog*, the *Franklin*, the *Congress*, the *Experiment*, the *Hancock*, the *Adams*, and the *Warren*. The building of 13 frigates, each of 36 guns, had besides been ordered by the General Congress.

This Flotilla, and swarms of Privateers, issuing from the American ports, had greatly harrassed British commerce, made innumerable prizes, and, in some degree, supplied the want of several necessary articles, which the non importation agreements entered into before the war, the yet rude and infant state of internal manufactures, and a total abstraction from European intercourse, unavoidably produced. Immense, and almost incredible, was the amount of the captures made by the American cruizers in 1776; and had the captured articles been originally appropriated to the use of the army, as they afterwards were, the measure would have saved many valuable lives, or, at least, precluded much individual distress. The most remarkable enterprize of Hopkins, was an expedition against *New Providence*, one of the *Bahama Islands*. The chief object of this attempt was to seize on a considerable quantity of ammunition, known to be deposited there. Owing to some ill-timed delays, however, the powder was removed by the royal Agents, soon enough to defeat this object. Hopkins only possessed himself of other military supplies, and took some prisoners of rank, among whom the Governor of the Island. On its return, the American Flotilla made several prizes; but an unsuccessful engagement with the *Glasgow*, to the East of Long Island, added to the failure of the main object of the expedition, disappointing the hopes entertained of the skill and bravery of the American Commodore, brought upon him, deservedly perhaps, universal censure. By the blockade just mentioned, the usefulness of the Flotilla was utterly neutralized.

Critical  
state of A-  
merican af-  
fairs.

Such, towards the close of 1776, was the aspect of American affairs—the city of New-York, Rhode Island, and part of New Jersey, in possession of the foe—*Ticonderoga* safe, indeed, for the present, but threatened with an overwhelming attack, at no very distant day—the junction of *Carleton*, or his successors, with the hostile force in New York, highly probable—*Washington's* army, though considerably augmented, still greatly inferior to that of the enemy, in numbers, discipline, experience, and other military advantages—multitudes of disaffected or deluded individuals, in those places which the victors had overrun, eagerly accepting the humiliating pardon, proffered by the royal Commissioners, and not a few joining the British

CHAP.  
IX.

standard—the progress of the recruiting service slow and unpromising in many of the states—the continental bills unavoidably verging towards depreciation—in short, almost every part of the political horizon dark, tempestuous, appalling.

Yet, the pilots of the State did not yield to unmanly terrors. Increasing dangers seemed to energize their efforts. They had built and launched a vessel of noble structure, and embarked in it the destinies of a whole people, as well as their own. Steadily standing at the helm, they were resolved to leave no labour, no experiment, un-essayed, in order to overcome every difficulty, and happily to guide that admirable fabric to its destined port.

Fortitude of  
Congress in  
this crisis.

When General Washington crossed the Delaware, Congress, in a fervid, solemn, and impressive address, reminding the people of the causes, nature, and objects of the contest, and of the unquestionable consequences of an ultimate failure, endeavoured to promote unanimity and vigor through all the States, and more particularly to excite the inhabitants of Pennsylvania, New-Jersey, and the adjacent States, to an immediate and spirited exertion, in opposition to the foe that now threatened Philadelphia. Their language was firm, and evinced an unbounded confidence in the courage of their countrymen, and in the effects of an unconquerable attachment to freedom. Their view of events was far from discouraging. "Resistance," they said, "has now been made with a spirit and resolution becoming a free people, and with a degree of success\* hitherto which could scarcely have been expected. The present advances of the enemy are owing not to any capital defeat, or a want of valor in the army that opposed them, but to a sudden diminution of its numbers from the expiration of those enlistments, which, to ease the people, were at first adopted. Many have already joined the army to supply the deficiency, and we call, in the most earnest manner, on all the friends of liberty, to exert themselves without delay in this most pressing emergency. In every other part, our arms have been successful, and, in other respects, our sacred cause is in the most promising situation. Essential services have already been rendered us by foreign states, and we have received the most positive assurances of further aid. Let us not be wanting to ourselves. All that is valuable to us, as men and freemen, is at stake.—The loss of Philadelphia would not be the loss of the cause—yet, while it can be saved, let us not, in the close of the campaign afford the enemy such a ground of triumph—but give a check to their progress, and convince our friends in the distant parts, that one spirit animates

\* Evacuation of Boston—flight of Dunmore—entire failure before Charles-ton—check at Ticonderoga—maritime success, &c. &c.

CHAP.  
IX.

Articles of  
confederati-  
on and per-  
petual Uni-  
on.

the whole.—What a pity it should be that this rich and populous city of Philadelphia should fall into the enemy's hands, or that we should not lay hold of the opportunity of destroying their principal army, now removed from their ships of war, in which their greatest strength lies!"\*

We have already adverted to the measures of the General Congress for raising a permanent force, and for correcting the capital defects under which the army evidently laboured. That venerable Body, with a calmness and deliberation which would seem to belong only to the security of a profound peace, now proceeded to draw up articles of Confederation and perpetual Union between the States. The intention of this measure was to define, with satisfactory precision, the proper internal authority of each State, to point out its relations with other States, and to lodge in the head of this immense Body politic, that is, in the General Congress, powers and energies adequate to the controul and direction of the whole. This great work of confederation, which particularly aimed at bringing the large and small States as near together as possible, was submitted to the consideration of the Legislatures of all the United States, with a view to their conclusive ratification, through the medium of their Delegates in the General Congress. For a considerable time it dragged heavily on, as might well be expected, where so many distinct parties were concerned, and where, of course, a variety of views, interests, and passions must have existed. It was, however, ultimately effected, and with all its deficiencies it proved eminently, and indeed vitally useful to the common cause.

Extensive  
powers given to General Washington,

The rapid approach of the enemy towards Philadelphia, dictated the expediency of Congress retiring to a safer and more tranquil place. Baltimore was fixed upon for that purpose; and, on the 20th of December, the Members of the Great National Council assembled there. One of their earliest measures, after this meeting, was to vest General Washington, in whom they reposed a just and unbounded confidence, with full and complete powers "to raise and collect together, in the most speedy and effectual manner, from any or all of the U States, 16 battalions of infantry, in addition to those already voted; to appoint officers for the said battalions of infantry; to raise, officer, and equip 3000 light-horse, three regiments of artillery, and a corps of engineers, and to establish their pay; to apply to any of the States for such aid of the militia as he should judge necessary; to form such magazines of provisions, and in such places, as he should think proper; to displace and appoint all officers under the rank of Brigadier-General, and to fill up all vacancies, in every other department of the American armies; to take, wherever he might be, whatever he might want for the use of the army, if the

\* Remembrancer for 1776, part 3rd, p. 270—1—2,—Passim.



CHAP.  
IX.

inhabitants would not sell it, allowing a reasonable price for the same; to arrest and confine all persons refusing to take the Continental currency, or otherwise disaffected to the American cause." Those powers approximating to dictatorial authority, and which only the transcendent virtue of Washington, and the imperious exigencies of the times could justify, were vested in the commander in Chief for the term of six months, unless sooner determined by Congress. Thus did the patriotism of an exalted character, superior to all suspicion, and the generous confidence of a people who ascribed their reverses, not to individual treachery, ignorance, or timidity, but to the zeal, uncontrollable necessity of circumstances, happily concur in invigorating that military system which alone could retrieve former defeats, and ultimately lead to the accomplishment of the objects in view!

The rigor adopted in respect to individuals impairing by their distrust, either real or pretended, the credit of the Continental bills, may appear unquestionable. Yet, it was recommended by the financial embarrassments of the country at that time. Taxation, which alone could have lessened, if not entirely removed those embarrassments, having been rejected as a dangerous, because an unpopular measure, the artificial substitutes of loans and lotteries were found inadequate to the extraordinary exigencies resulting from the present situation of the country. "The worst enemy we have now (says an eminent patriot from Massachusetts, in a letter written about that time, and at this moment before our eyes) is poverty—real poverty in the shape of exuberant wealth. No poor mortals were ever more perplexed than we have been with three misfortunes at once, any one of which would have been alone sufficient to have distressed us—a redundancy of the medium of exchange—a diminution of the quantity at market of the luxuries, the conveniences, and even the necessities of life—and an increase of the demand for all these, occasioned by large armies in the country.—The grand desideratum now is, to raise the value of our money, and thereby lower the prices of things. Without this, we cannot carry on the war—with it, we can make it a diversion." These difficulties, however, were inconsiderable in comparison with subsequent fiscal embarrassments. Popular enthusiasm and confidence still counteracted the natural effects of vast paper emissions,\* without specific pledges for their redemption.

Financial difficulties.

\* It appears that Continental bills had then been emitted as follows:—

1775—January 5,	-	-	10,000 to exchange ragged bills.
June 22,	-	-	2,000,000
July 25,	-	-	1,000,000
November 22,	-	-	3,000,000

CHAP.  
IX.

December.  
Friendly  
disposition  
of most Eu-  
ropean pow-  
ers.

Sanguine hopes of foreign assistance were, as we have already remarked, entertained by Congress, and the people themselves. In some Countries of Europe, a favorable disposition towards America, had been manifested. To her ships the ports of France and of Spain had been early opened. Those nations rejoiced at the prospect of an extensive share in the benefits of a trade hitherto monopolized by England. In their numerous harbours, particularly in those of their West-India possessions, American privateers were admitted, and allowed to dispose of their prizes. In vain the British Cabinet loudly remonstrated to the Courts of Versailles and Madrid, against that indulgence. A resistance likely to terminate in crippling a formidable rival, accorded with the secret views of those Courts; and, though they did not openly approve and encourage in any of their subjects, individual zeal and enterprise in favor of America, they did not peremptorily repress them. Many French officers, of eminent talents, were suffered to engage in the service of Congress. Among these was the Engineer Duportail, whom General Washington, judiciously, and successfully employed. Another, the Chevalier de Fermoy, was promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General. Immense naval and military preparations were also making in the principal French and Spanish ports, which alarmed Great-Britain, and encouraged the Americans. Holland, though less menacing, because less warlike, and less powerful than either France or Spain, yet efficiently served the new republic, whilst actively exerting her mercantile spirit, and furnishing to the United States various supplies. The other European powers more or less concurred in the same friendly sentiments. Portugal alone, long since an humble and faithful satellite of England, shut her ports against American privateers, and would not permit the exportation to America of military and other stores.

For the purpose of cherishing in the French Cabinet dispositions so auspicious and so promising, and of procuring large supplies of arms and ammunition, together with clothing for the army, Mr. Silas Deane had, early in 1776, been secretly sent to France. He successfully effected some of the intended objects; and this partial success, combined with the general aspect of the political horizon of Europe, induced the appointment, already noticed, of Dr. Franklin and Arthur Lee, to act jointly with Mr.

---

1776	February 17,	-	-	4,000,000
	May 9,	-	-	5,000,000
	June 28,	-	-	1,000,000
	July 22,	-	-	5,000,000
	November 2,	-	-	5,000,000 in small change.

---

Total, \$ 26,010,000

Deane, as Commissioners from the United States, near the Court of Versailles.

CHAP.  
IX.

These Commissioners were instructed to make further purchases of arms and ammunition; to solicit from the French government leave to arm and equip, in their ports, any number of vessels not exceeding six, at the expence of the United States, those vessels to war on British property; to improve the friendly dispositions of his Most Christian Majesty into a treaty of alliance, the outlines of which had been traced by Congress; to procure, if practicable, a loan of ten millions of *frances*, and a supply of twenty or thirty thousand muskets and bayonets, together with ammunition, and brass field pieces, the whole to be sent to America under convoy by France, at the charge of the United States; above all, to urge the solemn recognition by his Most Christian Majesty of the Independence proclaimed by Congress, and to which the people were resolved firmly and invariably to adhere. With these mandates other injunctions were connected, pressing on the French nation the expediency of the proposed alliance, as promising to them a vast accession of commercial benefit and political importance; quieting the fears conceived by Spain in relation to her Colonies on the Continent of America; and tending to prevent, through the magnanimous interference of the French Monarch, further enlistments of foreign mercenaries under the banners of Great-Britain.

Leading objects of the mission to France.

Dr. Franklin reached Nantes in the beginning of December and immediately repaired to Paris. His fame had preceded him. Important discoveries in science had illustrated his name long before it was endeared by patriotism. In France, the American contest had early excited universal attention; nay, it had produced there an effervescence of popular enthusiasm, unprecedented in other than transcendent national concerns. Popular feelings are seldom regulated by the frigid calculations of statesmen and economists. Both the Count de Vergennes and Mr. Turgot, though auguring well of the embarrassments of a haughty and dangerous rival, had recommended in respect to American affairs, a cautious, temporizing policy; and the youthful successor of Louis XV. naturally was of a pacific, unambitious disposition. All this, however, could not prevent the burst of national sympathy to which we have alluded. Historians, who too often view nations and individuals in an unfavorable light, have ascribed this moral phenomenon to the influence of the mutually hostile sentiments, which political and other causes have contributed deeply to implant in the minds of the natives of France and England. In looking for motives of action, we would rather elevate than debase our species. To us the lively interest manifested throughout France for the rights of America,

Dec. 13.  
Dr. Franklin arrives in France.



CHAP.  
IX.

---

appears to have originated in purer sources; we mean, in that inherent magnanimity of the human character which, upon viewing some great and arduous struggle of truth with error, of virtue with profligacy, of liberty with despotism, impels the generality of mankind to the right side of the question, and enlists their best propensities and energies in behalf of the wise, the good, and the brave of any age or country; and, moreover, in the peculiar spirit of the French nation—a nation not merely polite, affable, refined, enlightened. but ardently alive to every generous and exalted feeling; and prompt to imbibe and cherish impulsive partialities for genius, virtue, and heroism, of whatever region they may be the growth. No wonder that, among such a people. injured America should have many and strenuous advocates; no wonder that, among the same people, the venerable representative of a country driven to the last extremities by British oppression, should meet with the respect and sympathy due to his private, as well as to his public character! In Franklin the French had long admired the Philosopher, and esteemed the Statesman; in him they now loved the Patriot. They were deeply struck with that fervid devotion to his native country, which, at an advanced age of seventy-five, had brought him over an ocean of vast extent, and through multiplied and imminent perils of watchful hostility, to plead her cause, and lay her distresses before the first throne in Europe. In the eyes of all, this cause was just, noble, glorious; it was, they emphatically exclaimed, the cause of humanity; and well did it become France to espouse it—France so often the refuge, the hope, and the auxiliary of distressed nations. as well as the asylum of persecuted individuals!—The modesty, the dignified simplicity, the profound sense of Franklin, his socratic manner, blended with an amiable gaiety, conciliated at the same time affection and esteem. He had taken his residence at Passy, a pleasant village, near the gates of Paris. In this retreat, he seemed to bewail the hard fate of his beloved country, a prey to the horrors of a cruel war, and threatened with slavery still more cruel. A report having gone abroad that Lord Stormont the British ambassador, unable to conceal his jealousy and alarm at the American mission, the manner in which it was received, and its probable results, and particularly uneasy at the vicinity of Dr. Franklin, had demanded, in the name of his Court, that he should be forthwith ordered out of the Kingdom, the popular feeling rose to a degree scarcely conceivable. Indignation against England, and sympathy for Franklin and his country, now were at their acme. The former was viewed as a relentless, implacable tyrant; the latter, as a glorious martyr in the best of causes, that of liberty and patriotism. Whenever Franklin issued from his modest retreat, to attend the sitting of the Academy of Sciences

(which was frequently the case) gazing and admiring crouds hailed his appearance, and attended his steps. Men eminent by their stations, their birth, or their fame, alike sought his converse ; and fashion herself paid to him a tribute, which, though fugitive and unsubstantial, was not to be totally disregarded, since it furnished flattering and auspicious indications of the public sentiment. Busts of Franklin adorned almost every house ; even the fanciful toys of the day exhibited his venerable features. His sententious remarks were re-echoed in every circle ; and, from one extremity of France to the other, a loud cry was heard, calling upon the Government, to assist a country, possessing so many claims to the sympathy and support of a magnanimous nation.\* Thus strong was the current of opinion, impelling France towards America ! But it sufficed not to have conciliated the national mind ; the monarch and his ministers must be propitiated. On accomplishing this, Franklin's exertions were chiefly bent, and we will soon have to record their successful result.

Commissioners were likewise appointed to the Courts of Madrid, Vienna, Berlin, and Florence, all known to be well disposed to the American cause. It appeared expedient to give each of those Courts solemn assurances of the immutable resolution of the United States to maintain that Independence which they had asserted. Another desirable object was to counteract, through the interposition of the Emperor of Germany, and of the King of Prussia, as well as through that of France, the further purchase by the British Government of armed mercenaries, to act against America. In addition to these important purposes, a treaty of amity and commerce with the Court of Berlin, and a loan from the grand Duke of Tuscany, were contemplated. It was understood that, during a protracted period of profound peace, and unprecedented prosperity, that Sovereign naturally of an economizing disposition, had hoarded up immense treasures. As no interruption of the calm enjoyed by the Italian States, was then probable, the practicability of borrowing, upon easy terms, part of the wealth which lay dormant and unproductive in

Other missions.

---

\* This picture of national enthusiasm, is not too strongly coloured. The Historian, though extremely young, at that time, recollects some circumstances connected with it. He distinctly remembers the eager curiosity, and deep veneration which the appearance of Franklin, every where excited, having himself, at that tender age, been taken by his Parents, a distance of several leagues, to behold the illustrious American. He remembers also, and much more distinctly, the religious awe and profound sorrow, with which the Constituent Assembly heard the short, but impressive address of Mirabeau, on the death of the *Sage, who had enlightened both worlds* ; nor has he forgotten the funeral honors paid to Franklin's memory, throughout all France, less in consequence of this address, than from the effect of universal admiration and respect for him who

“ Eripuit coclo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis.”

CHAP.  
IX.

1777

the grand Duke's coffers, readily suggested itself. To the mission designed for this specific object, Mr. Izard was nominated, but his exertions were ineffectual.—Mr. Mazzei, a native of Tuscany, formerly employed in managing some of the concerns of the Ducal treasury, but who had, soon after the beginning of the American contest, emigrated to Virginia, with a view to introduce, upon an extensive scale, the cultivation of vines and olive-trees, was afterwards deputed by the Governor of the State, P. Henry, to negotiate a loan in behalf of the Commonwealth; this attempt, though conducted by Mazzei with great zeal and ability, equally failed of success.

Military  
events during the  
Winter, and  
the Spring.

As we progress through the vast field of revolutionary events, it would be pleasing to stop short at every interesting and commanding station, and thence to open to the companions of our journey a full view of the important scenes which present themselves on all sides. This, however, the rules of particular history, and the limits of our plan, equally forbid. Rapid glances over those transactions of which Virginia was not the immediate theatre, must satisfy us.

February.

The bold and fortunate manœuvres of General Washington, at a moment when the haughty foe, lulled by victory into a presumptuous security, thought only of reaping the fruits of conquest, had saved Philadelphia, recovered almost the whole of New Jersey, and forced the enemy, now confined within the narrow bounds of the Country about Brunswick and Amboy, to operations exclusively defensive. Against his foraging parties, stratagem and adventurous enterprize were often used with brilliant success; and the American army was thus gradually prepared and inspirited for the toils and hazards of the approaching campaign. Inoculation, cautiously introduced, ended in beneficial results, and removed one of the principal apprehensions of the commander in Chief. Ever intent on his country's honor and advantage, Washington reluctantly submitted to the inactivity of a winter encampment. A plan against New York was formed, and Heath directed to advance towards King's Bridge, with his own troops and the reinforcements under Lincoln, to the end of effecting a salutary diversion. Fort Independence was, therefore, attacked, but without success. An expedition planned, at the same time, against Rhode Island, was likewise relinquished. Washington's army yet remained in a state of comparative weakness. From many and various impediments, the battalions ordered by Congress were slowly raised; and only the light war of skirmishes could with prudence be ventured upon. Some movements of the enemy renewed Washington's fears for Philadelphia, but these fears happily proved groundless. Inimical attempts made by the disaffected in the counties of Worcester, So-



CHAP.  
IX.

merset, and Dorset, were quickly repressed by the vigilance and activity of the Patriots; besides the gallant Mercer, Virginia lost, in the partial engagements which took place during the winter, several of her bravest sons. Washington, who wept over them, because he was a man, might yet, as a soldier and a citizen, exult at the glory of his own his native State, from which, as from a nursery of valour, sprung so many able and intrepid defenders of the liberties of America, and the rights of the whole human race.

In enlisting her quota of men for the Continental service, Virginia encountered, in common with the other States considerable difficulties. A sense of local danger, and other causes, more or less operative, retarded the completion of the force to be furnished by the State. Governor Henry once contemplated to fill the deficiencies in the intended regiments with volunteers, engaged to serve for six months. General Washington, convinced that short enlistments must prove not only insufficient, but ruinous, disapproved of the plan: It was therefore abandoned, and a counter proclamation\* issued, stopping the formation of volunteer corps, and most emphatically urging the enlistment of soldiers on terms adequate to the necessity of the times, and to the wishes of Congress, and of the commander in Chief. Early in May, the battalions required, were so far filled, as to render it probable that a draught from the militia, would be unnecessary.† This measure, however, we will find ultimately adopted.

February 21

The Spring having now returned, more active operations were hourly looked for. To the expected renewal of hostile scenes, the British precluded by the destruction of some American stores at Peek's-Kill, and by more serious injuries at Danbury, in Connecticut. The loss of the gallant Wooster, who fell in this last affair, whilst striking the rear of the retreating invaders, was severely felt by the Americans. The intrepid Arnold who, on the same occasion, harrassed the enemy with great effect, added a new laurel to his brow; nor had the British much cause to boast of this expedition. Independently of a loss of about 170 men killed, prisoners and missing, their savage conduct in burning Danbury and Ridgefield, inflamed the popular mind even to phrenzy; and the hopes which General Howe had conceived of enlisting, in that quarter, multitudes of disaffected individuals, under the Royal standard, were totally frustrated. Nor were the Americans

April.

\* See in Purdie's Virginia Gazette, for December 27th, 1776, the proclamation of Henry for raising volunteers; and in the same Gazette for February 21st, 1777, the counter proclamation here alluded to.

† See Appendix, No. 16.

CHAP.  
IX.

---

May 24.

slow in retaliating stratagem, and destruction of military stores. With a handful of brave companions. Colonel Meigs, already conspicuous as one of the boldest followers of Arnold in the Canadian expedition, passed from Guilford to Sagg-Harbour, a small port in the Northern section of Long-Island, where a considerable quantity of forage, grain, and other necessities, was understood to have been collected for the Royal army at New York.—Meigs and his men, reaching the British deposit, about 2 o'clock in the morning, advanced on the guards with fixed bayonets, overpowered them—set the vessels and forage on fire—killed, or secured all the soldiers and sailors, except a few, whose escape the darkness of the night favoured—returned to Guilford, without sustaining any loss—having, in 25 hours, removed, by land and water, over a space of 90 miles. Six of the enemy were killed, and ninety taken prisoners. Twelve brigs and sloops, one an armed vessel mounting 12 guns, were entirely consumed, together with a large quantity of forage, corn, rum, and other supplies. No private property was injured. The prisoners were humanely treated, and all the articles belonging to them, held no less inviolable than their persons. The thanks of Congress were solemnly returned to this gallant party, and a sword voted to Colonel Meigs, as a distinctive mark of high and unanimous approbation.

A mysterious cloud still enveloped the designs of General Howe for the opening campaign. It was, indeed, evident that two great objects must occupy his thoughts—a junction on the banks of the Hudson, with the army from the North—and the occupation of Philadelphia, then the metropolis of the new Republic. But which of these two objects was he determined to pursue? If the second, was he likely to attempt a march through the Jerseys, and the passage of the Delaware, which might be successfully opposed? Or would he, availing himself of the facility which a numerous and powerful fleet afforded him of conveying, without annoyance, his cumbrous forces up the Chesapeake or the Delaware Bay, proceed by water to some favourable point of debarkation, and there pour out his legions, which, in a country unintersected by large rivers, undefended by high mountains, might with ease overcome all probable resistance, and possess themselves of the devoted City? This uncertainty greatly perplexed the American Fabius. He saw, however, the necessity of some cautious plan, tending to utilize and consolidate, instead of dissipating and enfeebling, the forces under his command.—These forces were to constitute a main and central body—and communications must be secured between that body and the secondary armies at Ticonderoga and at Peek's-Kill, so as to facilitate reciprocal aid and sup-

## CHAP.

## IX.

port, upon a full developement of the enemy's views. For this purpose, a position was selected on the high and strong grounds near the Rariton: and that every threatened point might be rendered as defensible as circumstances allowed, the troops from the Eastern States were distributed between Ticonderoga and Peek's Kill; those from Jersey to the South, including North-Carolina, were directed to join General Washington. The exposed situation of South Carolina and Georgia, made it expedient not to draw, for the present, any troops from those States. In their solicitude for the fate of Philadelphia, Congress had directed the formation of a camp on the western side of the Delaware.— This camp, Washington composed of militia, supported by a small body of regulars, and caused the whole to be placed under the command of the experienced Arnold. To Middlebrook, the advantageous scite which we have mentioned, he himself repaired, adding to its natural strength several fortifications of art, and anxiously watching from its heights the movements of his adversary, in order to direct opposition whenever those movements should indicate its necessity. Sullivan, stationed at Princeton, was directed to wage the *petite guerre* of a partisan, and that only. The militia of New Jersey, who now manifested for the service of their country, an uncommon degree of alacrity, received orders, so soon as the enemy should commence his operations, incessantly to hang on his rear, harrass his flanks, and intercept or disperse his detached parties, without, however, exposing themselves to the hazards of an extensive engagement.

May 28.

These judicious and salutary dispositions, dictated by a consciousness of his own inferiority in numbers, discipline, and other military advantages, Washington was enabled to complete before the opening of the campaign, by the unaccountable dilatoriness of the British Commander. Nor was this slow, indecisive, creeping policy confined to Sir William Howe. Happily for America, it characterized, with a few exceptions, the measures of the British leaders, during the whole course of the war.

Finally emerging from his protracted torpor, Sir William Howe, early in June, transferred himself, with strong reinforcements, from New York into Jersey, marched from Amboy to Brunswick, and appeared to threaten Philadelphia. His first object, however, was to draw Washington from an encampment where he could not be advantageously attacked, and to bring him to a general action in a more open and level part of the country, where a single well directed and mighty blow could annihilate his whole force. Washington possessed too much sagacity not to penetrate the enemy's intention, and too much prudence to relinquish his secure position, and, with an army in so many respects inferior to that of his opponent, to stake the dearest interests of his country on the fate of a single bat-

June.



CHAP.  
IX.

tle. When, therefore, the British forces advanced from Brunswick towards the Delaware, in two formidable columns, the American General, still convinced that the first blow was intended against himself, and steadily resolved to maintain his favourable position, far from quitting the heights of Middlebrook, assumed there a more formidable attitude, erecting additional defences, and calling to his aid detachments from the corps at Peek's-Kill. In the meantime, Morgan with his select Body of riflemen, and Sullivan with some cavalry and the Jersey militia, severely galled the hostile lines; and had Sir William Howe, leaving undisturbed the main American army, made a serious attempt to cross the Delaware, Washington contemplated, an attack on his rear, whilst his front should be opposed by Arnold. For the execution of this scheme, however, no opportunity was offered. Baffled in all his attempts to seduce or compel the American General to a decisive action, Howe rapidly retraced his steps to Brunswick, and thence to Amboy, where with a view to an embarkation of his troops, in pursuit of some important object yet unknown to the Americans, he immediately threw over the channel on the west of Staten Island, a portable bridge originally intended for the passage of the Delaware, and thus conveyed to that Island his heavy baggage, and part of his troops. —During the retreat of the enemy from Brunswick to Amboy, Morgan, Sullivan, and Maxwell, were directed to harrass the enemy in flank, whilst Greene, detached from Middlebrook, at the head of three brigades, should annoy them in the rear. From accidental causes, little injury was inflicted on the retiring foe, except by Morgan's formidable corps.

June 23

Washington had long been desirous of striking some important blow. The passage of the British army into Staten Island seemed to favour his wish. He, therefore, advanced to Quibbletown, with a view to fall on the rear of his adversary, or, at least, to cover Stirling's division and other American parties, which had already approached the hostile lines. This deviation from his cautious system was near proving fatal to the American Chief. Recalling the portion of his troops which had already passed over to Staten-Island, Sir William Howe rapidly marched in two columns, towards Westfield. Whilst one of these columns should attack Washington at Quibbletown, the other was to seize the heights which he had too promptly abandoned. Apprized of this movement, Washington immediately regained the camp at Middlebrook; and the enemy frustrated in his main object, though successful in a sharp skirmish with Sterling's division, near the Scotch plains, crossed over to Staten Island, on the 30th of June, and weighing from Sandy-Hook, on the 23d of July, steered for the South, leaving Washington doubtful and perplexed, as to

June 23

Howe sails  
from Sandy-  
Hook.  
July 23.

the real object of this embarkation. He had always believed the object of Sir William Howe to be the command of the upper Hudson, and under this impression, had taken every possible measure to render the station of Peek's Kill inexpugnable. Now apprehensive of a feint, he took a position which alike enabled him expeditiously to extend the protection of his army either to that important pass, or to the City of Philadelphia. A bold and successful attempt by Lieutenant Colonel Barton, with a handful of militia, against Major General Prescott, on whom the command of the British force in Rhode-Island had lately devolved, greatly animated, about this time, the hopes of the Americans. Unobserved by the guard boats of the enemy, Barton and his few attendants passed from Warwick to the western part of the Island, proceeded without loss of time to Prescott's quarters, seized the centinel at his door, and one of his aids-de-camp, took the General himself in his bed, and, with cautious celerity, conveyed him to an American post. Thus was an officer of equal rank with Major General Lee, and likely to be exchanged for him, captured under circumstances nearly similar to those which had placed the latter in the hands of the enemy. This achievement was justly applauded by Congress, the people, and the army.

The belief of Washington that, although the hostile fleet had bent its course to the Southward, still the real object of General Howe was a junction with Burgoyne, on the upper Hudson, had derived new strength from late intelligence of the impetuosity with which the latter pursued his victorious march towards Albany. Early in July, Ticonderoga had been evacuated by St. Clair, without a siege. In its retreat, the American division had been hotly pursued, overtaken, and notwithstanding a most gallant defence, defeated with considerable loss. Fort Anne and Skeensborough were occupied by the enemy; harrassed, broken, dispirited, the troops under St. Clair appeared totally unable to check the triumphant progress of the British. The junction alluded to having thus become more practicable, it was natural to suppose that an attempt towards it would be made by Sir William Howe; yet Washington kept, at the same time, an anxious eye on Philadelphia. The inhabitants of the lowe Counties of Pennsylvania, of Delaware, and of New Jersey, were called to arms, and other preparatory measures taken against eventual invasion, through the Bay of Delaware.

Events on  
the Lakes.

## CHAPTER X.

---

*General transactions in Virginia—Measures against disaffected persons and deserters—Arrivals of supplies from France—Meeting of a Scientific society—Beneficial objects of that society—Meeting of the Legislature—Principal acts of this Session—Measures for completing the quota of men for the Continental service—Oath of allegiance prescribed—Continental Loan Office established at Williamsburg—Establishment of another Loan Office for the State—Act to support the credit of the Continental and State paper money—Act against desertion—Provisions against incursions and insurrections—Act relative to the Congressional Delegation from the State—Appointment of Delegates—Thanks of the House given to R. H. Lee—Provisions for the recovery of public money, and for the fulfilment of contracts with Government—other labours of the Legislature—Act in favor of Hampden Sidney Academy—P. Henry is re-appointed Governor—Public Records removed to Richmond—Adjournment of the Legislature—Arrival of the Baron de Kalb, and of the Marquis De la Fayette in America—Proclamation of the Governor against certain dangerous persons—Anniversary of Independence—Washington reinforces the Northern army—Sullivan's excursion into Staten Island—The British fleet enters the Chesapeake—Active measures in Virginia thereupon—Howe lands below Elkton—Battle of Brandy Wine—Howe enters Philadelphia.*

### CHAP. X.

---

General transactions in Virginia. Measures against disaffected persons.

And against deserters.

Whilst the two armies were thus preluding to the awful drama to be shortly acted on the banks of the Hudson or on those of the Delaware, the Executive of Virginia pursued, with energetic zeal, the measures sanctioned by the late General Assembly, for the removal of obnoxious persons, and for an adequate augmentation of military force. British merchants, not well affected to the cause of America, were peremptorily ordered to leave the State, and such as failed to comply, in due time, with this order, taken into custody and treated as prisoners of war. The recruiting service was pressed with successful ardour, and desertion subjected to rigorous penalties. Under the influence of mistaken sympathy, or attachment, several persons harboured and concealed individuals who, at so critical a juncture, unblushingly abandoned the banners of their country. On the 24th of April, Governor Henry issued a proclamation intended to crush a practice so nefarious, in a case of voluntary enlistments, and when the



lives of the citizens, their liberty, and whatever Freemen ought to hold dear, were invaded by an armed force ; directing diligent search to be made for all military fugitives, but, at the same time, opening a prospect of pardon to such as should spontaneously surrender themselves. Energetic regulations were besides adopted, tending to enforce, among the troops, order, discipline, a due respect for property and other civil rights ; in short, a strict adherence to all the duties of their honorable profession. Thus were the fundamentals of military worth, gradually established, by the introduction of regularity, system, and experience ; they made ample amends for those deficiencies which the general state of things did not yet permit to remove.

In the mean time, the public mind was cheered by the appearance, in the principal rivers of the State, of several French vessels loaded with warlike stores. Arrivals of this description were now frequent in different parts of the United States. They resulted either from private commercial enterprise, or from purchases made in France by Dr. Franklin and his colleagues ; such purchases being secretly allowed, and even favoured by the Cabinet of Versailles. From Holland and Spain, various supplies were also procured.—Another circumstance productive of considerable joy and benefit, was the return, about this time, of Colonel Gibson and Captain Lynn, who, in May 1776, had been sent by General Lee to New-Orleans, with a small escort, for the purpose of negotiating with the Governor, the purchase of a certain quantity of gun-powder. Of this valuable article, they now brought to Virginia twelve thousand pounds, obtained on moderate terms. This expedition, which ended so successfully notwithstanding the multiplied dangers of the route, was universally applauded, and soon after liberally rewarded by the Legislature.

Arrivals of  
supplies  
from France

Amid the hurry of revolutionary scenes, and the clangour of war, it is pleasing to behold an homage paid to science. A taste not only for elegant literature, but also for profound research, at that time, prevailed through Virginia. A zealous professor at the University of William and Mary, the learned Dr. Small,\* patronized and encour-

Meeting of  
a Scientific  
Society.

\* Dr. Small is a remarkable instance of great individual usefulness. In Virginia, he formed disciples whose light has irradiated several departments of science ; and, on his return to England, having settled at Birmingham as a physician, his application of chemical discoveries to various manufactures, greatly promoted the prosperity of that place. Of that amiable and meritorious professor, the Historian has heard the late Governor Page, and the late Bishop Madison speak with enthusiasm. Mr. Jefferson also expresses the warmest gratitude for Dr. Small's enlightened and affectionate guidance of his studies, when at College. The Dr. was professor of mathematics, and for sometime occupied the philosophical chair. He first introduced into both schools rational and elevated

## CHAP.

## X.

1777

Beneficial  
objects of  
that society.

raged by Governor Fauquier, the ablest character who ever filled the chair of government in Virginia, before the revolution, had chiefly contributed to the diffusion of that taste. The men who possessed it had, most of them, been his disciples. They aimed at higher objects than present gratification or future fame. They fully understood the principle "that national industry is compounded of theory, application, and execution." Pursuits, which to vulgar eyes appear, at best, pure sources of rational amusement, were by those men justly considered as intimately linked with the interests and prosperity of husbandry, manufactures, the arts, and commerce. In the vast extent of their country, they saw boundless fields of research hitherto untrodden. A few natives of the State, possessing, at the same time, a laudable spirit of investigation, and much liberal leisure, had, indeed, explored some favourite spots in this immense region of promise. Scientific travellers, drawn to this side of the Atlantic by an ardent thirst after knowledge, had also examined and described the most prominent of those treasures with which the bounteous hand of nature has enriched the forests, the plains, the rivers, and the mountains of Virginia. But the solitary, unassisted efforts of the former, and the transient attention of the latter, could only produce narrow and unsatisfactory results. Their labours could not embrace a range of discovery sufficiently extensive to benefit mankind in any remarkable degree. The uses, nay, the very names of numberless native productions, still remained unknown. The uniform, unremitted, regular efforts of a zealous and systematic association, were evidently wanted to produce results splendidly and substantially useful. A society was, therefore, instituted, whose commendable objects were, by collecting into a proper focus, the solitary rays of genius and knowledge, which beamed here and there throughout Virginia, to throw some light on several of the Sciences, to render them all familiar to the inquisitive and the studious, and to apply them with skill and efficacy to the perfecting of those arts which might be most essentially serviceable to the country at large. Of this society, Mr. John Page, who with the active patriotism of which we have already related so many proofs, combined eminent scientific acquirements, was now President, and the Rev'd, James Madison, professor of mathematics at William and

---

courses of study; and from an extraordinary conjunction of eloquence and logic, was enabled to communicate them to the Students with great effect. Dr. Small was the intimate friend of George Wythe, and first introduced Mr. Jefferson to the patronage and friendship of that venerable character. Governor Fauquier has been delineated by Mr. Burk.—Suffice it to observe, that Small, Wythe, and Fauquier, were inseparable friends. Mr. Jefferson was soon added to that truly Attic society, whose chief enjoyments were philosophical conversation, and music.

Mary College, acted as one of the Secretaries, and as Curator to the same. For two years past, the meetings of that useful association had been interrupted, partly by the critical state of the country, and partly by the difficulty of convening so large a number of members as was required to constitute a meeting, conformably to certain fundamental regulations. It was, therefore, judged necessary, and resolved by a meeting held at the Capitol, early in May, that for the future seven members, with the President, or Vice President inclusive, might proceed to business, and that a Committee then appointed, should immediately examine and publish such papers as they should judge worthy of a place in their transactions. Several valuable papers on curious and useful subjects, some astronomical observations, and many interesting meteorological journals, had already been given in, and a hope was entertained of soon presenting the whole to the public eye through the medium of the press.—It is to be sincerely regretted that the calls of the war prevented those precious germs from receiving the developement of which they were susceptible. Such an institution, if cherished and nurtured into a proper degree of vigor, would have been attended with the happiest effects. It would have furnished delightful and manly entertainment for its members, diffused abroad a spirit of useful inquiry, stirred up a laudable emulation amongst men of genius, drawn out of obscurity, and brought into action, men of abilities, whose modesty has deprived the world of valuable discoveries, and speculations, in short, by reacting, in a greater or less degree, upon education, manners, and industry, it would have eminently contributed to the dignity of the national character, and to the agricultural and commercial prosperity of the country.

On the 5th of May, the General Assembly met at the Capitol, in Williamsburg. Archibald Cary was chosen Speaker of the Senate; and George Wythe placed in the Chair of the House of Delegates.

Meeting of  
the Legislature.

To this pre-eminent distinction, George Wythe was entitled not only by superior depth and extent of legal and political knowledge, but by spotless purity of virtue, and a devotion to the common cause, both fervent and systematic. Distinguished before the present contest, as a self-instructed scholar and philosopher, as an able, zealous and disinterested advocate, he had become, on the very first movements of the opposition, equally conspicuous as a firm and decided patriot. Actions, not words, characterized the patriotism of George Wythe. No sooner did Virginia call her sons to arms, than he joined a corps of volunteers. Exchanging forensic for martial pursuits, he was seen daily inuring himself to military discipline, and the toils of the field. But, though in need of



CHAP.  
X.

---

1777

soldiers, his country still more wanted statesmen and legislators. Her public councils were the proper theatre for abilities like his: there his peculiar usefulness could be exerted to the utmost advantage. Accordingly, the voice of his fellow-citizens called him to a seat in the House of Burgesses, over which he presided for some time, with universal approbation. A still more important trust was confided to him, by his appointment to the General Congress, which assembled on the 18th of May, 1775, and assigned to America "a distinct and separate station, among the nations of the world." The honorable task delegated to him, as a member of the Committee of Revisors, brought him back to Virginia; and the City of Williamsburg placed him in the Assembly, of which we now see him elected Speaker. It is worthy of remark that his illustrious pupil and friend, Thomas Jefferson, was associated with him, in all the stages of this patriotic and useful career.

Two striking circumstances distinguish this session—the immense number of petitions laid before the Assembly, and the parental attention bestowed upon them. In all countries, a state of war necessarily produces much private distress; but it is only in popular governments that private distress becomes so peculiarly an object of Legislative concern.

Principal  
acts of this  
Session.

Measures  
for complet-  
ing in Vir-  
ginia, the  
quota of  
men for the  
Continental  
service.

The same session exhibits an unabated activity of military preparation. The better organization and discipline of the militia, were efficiently promoted by judicious and energetic regulations. This was soon followed by *an act for the more readily completing the quota of troops to be raised in the Commonwealth.* Any two members of the militia, in any part of the State, who should, before the first day of October following, procure an able bodied soldier to serve for the term of three years, or during the war, were to be exempted from all draughts whatever, and from other military obligations, during the term for which such a recruit should be enlisted. The recruit himself was entitled to the Continental bounty and other allowances, independently of private gratuities. The arrest of soldiers, in cases of debts, or demands not exceeding fifty dollars, was prohibited by this act. But, not trusting entirely to the effect of the encouragements formerly offered, and those now given, the framers of this act directed a just and equal draught from the militia, in the following manner.

In each military section of the State, on or before the 10th of August, ensuing, the deficiency of men in the quota allotted to that section, was to be ascertained by proper military and civil authorities; and the militia, divided into as many lots as there might be men wanting, to complete the quota required. In forming the several divi-

sions, regard was to be principally had to the number of able bodied men, and to property, so as to observe as far as practicable, a strict equality in respect to both. Each division was to furnish one man. In case of refusal, or neglect, the field officers, jointly with certain magistrates, were to draught those individuals who could best be spared, and promised to be most serviceable. From these allotments scarcely any citizens were exempted; and the men thus draughted were placed, in all respects, upon the same footing as the Continental Regulars.

By the same Act a battalion of ten companies of artillery was directed to be raised. For this purpose the most liberal encouragements were held out—especially, in the provision made for the support and comfortable subsistence of the wives, children, and aged parents of all poor soldiers, during the absence of the latter in the public service.—We have mentioned a scheme of trade for which appropriations had been made in 1776. This afforded further means of excitement for entering the army. All soldiers were to be supplied out of the public store with clothing and other necessaries, at the prime cost, and without any advance whatever, upon directions to that effect from their commanding officers.

An oath of allegiance to the Commonwealth was required from all free-born male inhabitants above the age of sixteen. Recusants were to be immediately disarmed, and, moreover, deprived of all civil rights. Individuals coming from other States into Virginia were called upon to renounce all allegiance to the King of Great-Britain; and a promise was required from them not to do any thing prejudicial to the Independence and interest of the United States.

To carry into effect two resolutions of Congress, for the purpose of obtaining a loan of seven millions of Continental dollars for the use of the United States, a loan office was opened at Williamsburg, and William Armistead appointed to superintend its operations. For the repayment of the sums borrowed, at the end of three years, the faith of the United States was pledged. Specie, Continental paper dollars, or bills of credit heretofore emitted by the State, might constitute part, or the whole, of each sum thus borrowed; and that sum could not be less than two hundred dollars. Certificates were delivered to the lenders, who received upon the same, an annual interest of six per cent.

A desire to prevent the further emission of large sums of paper-money, induced an act for borrowing, on account of the Commonwealth, one million of dollars. G. Webb, or the Treasurer for the time being, was entrusted with the management of this loan, the circumstances of which resembled those of the last case, except that the sums bor-

CHAP.  
X.

1777

Oath of allegiance prescribed,

Continental loan office opened at Williamsburg.

Establishment of another loan office.

## CHAP.

## X.

1777

Act to support the credit of Continental and State paper money.

rowed were not to be less than three hundred dollars each. Severe penalties were enacted to prevent fraud of any kind, in respect both to Continental and State-certificates. In the event of this loan not succeeding, Treasury-Notes were to be issued in dollars, and parts of dollars. The circulation of these notes was enforced by certain regulations; and they were declared redeemable, on the first day of December, 1784.

Congress, aware of the immense and multifarious evils threatened by depreciation, had been solicitously employed in measures, tending to keep up the value of the Continental bills of credit. Among other provisions, they had recommended it to the respective Legislatures to pass laws, declaring these bills a tender in all payment of all debts. The Legislature of Virginia, therefore, passed an act making the bills of credit emitted by authority of Congress current in all payments, trade, and dealings within the Commonwealth. A refusal of Continental or State bills, or a demand of more, in such bills, than in any other species of money, or the exchange of the same for gold or silver below par, was made punishable with forfeiture, extinguishment of interest, and other penalties. Creditors were compelled to receive the tender thus made, and specialties were not to be withheld and secreted, in order to avoid the operation of this law \*—Thus far was the recommendation of Congress complied with by the Legislature of Virginia. That this measure was inadequate to its object will appear in the sequel of our narrative. Opinion, not law, regulates such matters. To the imperious necessity of the times, we must look for the motive of this policy; and acquaint the Legislators of the demoralizing, and, in many cases, individually ruinous operation of the retro-active clause in this act for the legal tender of paper bills. Both Congress and the State Legislatures, at that time, contemplated the redemption of paper-money at par with gold or silver. Hence this law, which a rapid subsequent depreciation rendered partially fatal, whilst it fundamentally promoted the universal good. It was one of those extreme cases which call for extreme remedies. SALUS POPULI SUPREMA LEX ESTO!

Act against desertion.

Deserting had become so frequent as to threaten serious injury to those great interests which now hung on the success of military operation. The Proclamation of Governor Henry against this fatal practice, and its abettors, has already been noticed. The Legislature, justly dreading the consequences of its continuance, adopted vigorous measures for the apprehension of soldiers known or suspected to be deserters. Strict injunctions to that effect were laid

\* See on *Synopsis* in the Appendix



on the commanding officers of the militia in the different counties; considerable rewards offered for the seizure of such fugitives, and heavy forfeitures denounced against those persons who should harbour or entertain any of them for the space of twenty four hours; or favour their concealment and escape by purchasing or exchanging their military accoutrements.

Another important act was passed, with a view to provide against invasions and insurrections. According to this Act, the militia of each county was to be divided into ten parts, as nearly equal as possible. From such allotments, no Citizen of military age and capacity was to be exempted. Upon receiving intelligence of any invasion or insurrection, in his own county, any officer of the militia was immediately to convey such intelligence to the commanding officer of said county; and, in case of extreme urgency, forthwith to raise the militia under his special command, and proceed against invaders or insurgents. If the case admitted of delay, or was so fraught with danger as to require a greater force than that which the county alone could furnish, a communication was to be made to the Governor by express, and assistance called from the adjacent counties. The Governor was then to call into the field adequate numbers of the militia from the most convenient parts of the State; and to appoint proper commanders. This act further regulated other points connected with this subject, and promotive of efficient service from the militia in the cases which it embraced.

The policy of frequently changing, in free political institutions, influential agents, suggested an act for limiting the continuance in office of the Delegates to Congress from the State of Virginia. The term of service was limited to three successive years, after which the same person could not serve again, till he had been one whole year out of office. It was, moreover, enacted that no person chosen in future as a member of the Continental Congress, should be eligible to either House of General Assembly of the Commonwealth, during his continuance in the Delegation. The same act regulated the salary of the Congressional Delegates.\*

Thomas Nelson, one of the Delegates then in Congress, was compelled by the bad state of his health to resign that station, no less laborious than honourable. George Mason was appointed in his place; and by the joint ballot of both houses, Benjamin Harrison, George Mason, Joseph Jones, Francis Lightfoot Lee, and John Harrison, were nominated

CHAP.  
X.

1777

Provision against invasions and insurrections.

Act relative to the Congressional Delegation from the State

Appointment of Delegates.

Thanks of the House given to F. H. Lee.

\* In 1775, the salary allowed the Congressional Delegates, was 45 Shil. (V. C.) per day, and 1 Shilling per mile; their present salary was 48 Sh. per day, and 1s. 3d. per mile. Depreciation was already felt.

CHAP.  
X.

1777

Delegates to the General Congress for one year, from the 14th of August following. Thus was R. H. Lee omitted in this appointment. It appears that reports\* injurious to the reputation and public character of that Gentleman, had in his absence, been alledged against him. This led him to solicit an enquiry by the House into the nature of those allegations. The Senate attended this enquiry, and their presence gave additional solemnity to the scene. Several witnesses were examined, and Mr. Lee heard in his place. His conduct had been pure, and his fame was brightened by this ordeal. The Senate withdrew; and the house came to a resolution, in consequence of which the Speaker, the venerable George Wythe, addressed Mr. Lee in the following words :

SIR,

It is with peculiar pleasure that I obey this command of the House, because it gives me an opportunity, whilst I am performing an act of duty to them, to perform an act of justice to you. Serving with you in Congress, and attentively observing your conduct there, I thought that you manifested in the American cause, a zeal truly patriotic; and, as far as I could judge, exerted the abilities for which you are confessedly distinguished, to prosecute the good and prosperity of your own country in particular, and of the United States in general. That the tribute of praise deserved, may reward those who do well, and encourage others to follow your example, the House has come to this resolution :

*Resolved*, That the thanks of this House be given by the Speaker to Richard Henry Lee, Esq. for the faithful services he has rendered his country, in the discharge of his duty, as one of the Delegates from this State in General Congress.

To which Mr. Lee answered :

*Mr. Speaker,*

I thank the House for this instance of candour and justice, which I accept the more willingly, as my conscience informs me it is not undeserved. I consider the approbation of my country, Sir, as the highest reward for faithful services, and it shall be my constant call to merit that approbation by a diligent attention to public duties.

My thanks are particularly due to you Sir, for the obliging manner in which you have been pleased to signify the vote of the House, and I pray you, Sir, to receive my grateful acknowledgements accordingly.

The result of this investigation having thus honorably dispelled the clouds which had for a moment obscured Mr. Lee's political character, he was fully restored to the con-

\* See Appendix, No. 22.



fidence of his fellow citizens. In the course of the session, George Mason having resigned his appointment as one of the Congressional Delegates, Richard H. Lee was nominated in his room.—The thanks of the Senate had, in the most flattering manner, been added to those of the House of Delegates.

Avarice and fraud are ever on the watch, ever ready to circumvent or seize their prey. They were insensibly creeping into the bosom of the new Republic. Various persons, receiving money at the treasury of the commonwealth for public uses, applied it to private purposes, and when called on, refused or neglected to repay the same. Against, this evil no adequate remedy had yet been provided. It was, therefore, enacted that it should be lawful for the Treasurer to sue such persons in the name of the Governor, and to obtain, against them and their securities, the usual redress of judgment and execution, with interest and costs. The same act guarded against the infraction of contracts entered into with the government; in short, it applied the axe to the root of unprincipled speculation, or criminal and ruinous neglect.

The labours of this active Session were not confined to the acts of which we have just stated the substance. Iron works, and the making of salt received from the Legislature that encouragement which the present situation of the country recommended. The salaries of the clergy were again suspended to a more distant period. Several acts of a local or personal nature were, moreover, passed. Among these, we remark the appointment of Commissaries to ascertain the losses sustained by the late inhabitants of Norfolk, with a view to extend to such among the sufferers as were friendly to the American cause, the aid of a sympathizing Government. Another act authorized the Trustees of the Academy of Hampden Sidney, in the county of Prince Edward, to raise by lottery a certain sum of money for the erection of additional buildings. That Academy, created by individual efforts, cherished and fostered by private patronage and voluntary contributions, had, in a short time, risen into a high reputation, and become entitled to the attention and encouragement of the Legislature. During the last session of General Assembly, the Trustees of Hampden Sidney, had made an eloquent appeal to the wisdom and liberality of the fathers of the State. "They were aware, they said, of the expences attendant on a war, in the infancy of Government; but, even under the growing load of public debt, there were reasons which seemed to them to justify, and render necessary their application for Legislative aid. In the course of human life, and during the ravages of a destructive war, it was very uncertain how many of those who now filled the civil and military departments of the Government, might

CHAP.  
X.

1777

Provision  
for the reco-  
very of pub-  
lic money

And for the  
fulfilment of  
contracts  
with Go-  
vernment.

Other la-  
bours of the  
Legisla-  
ture

Act in fa-  
vour of  
Hampden  
Sidney Aca-  
demy.



## CHAP.

## X.

1777

survive the calamities of their country ; and it was a fact well known, and regretted in many parts of the State, that few remained behind to supply the places of those who should be torn from it by death, or by war. All resources for education from Britain were cut off. The prospect of leaving an extensive Republic, young and unexperienced, before it had acquired stability, to be guided by the Counsels and defended by the arms of unskilful and unlettered men, was too unfavourable to be indulged by any lover of his country. It might be too late to seek a remedy for the evil at the expiration of the war, an event that was uncertain, and might be remote. They did not forget that there was already a college amply endowed ; but it was at present, and for a long time might be, too near the scene of danger, and too much in the midst of camps, to render the country that service it would otherwise be capable of doing. If every circumstance of situation and of common opinion were united in its favour, wise politicians would remember that it is dangerous to entrust so important a power as learning, into the hands of a single person, or only a few. Those who were acquainted with the History of England, well knew that the rivalry of Oxford and Cambridge had more than once preserved the liberties of that Kingdom, which might have fallen a sacrifice, if one of them had exclusively possessed the prerogative of education. They conceived, besides, that knowledge should be diffused, as equally and as extensively as possible among the people. Their designs carried in them no opposition to any place, or party of men ; their system was Catholic, and calculated to banish those invidious distinctions, which, however little they might have been felt under a monarchical government, were improper and injurious in a republican State. They did not claim to be set on a footing that would rival the public Seminary already established, their public services not having yet merited that extent of patronage. They only prayed that the Legislature would enable them to erect such buildings as were necessary to accommodate the great number of Students who daily applied for admission into the Academy, and whose hopes of an education were likely to be frustrated through the want of room for their reception. This aid they requested only upon the most parsimonious plan.”—The multiplied and important exigencies of the State were incompatible with a direct and immediate appropriation in favour of an establishment, which the prudence, close attention, and good management of its founders and its professors, had rendered so meritorious ; the Legislature of 1776 though forcibly impressed with the weighty considerations developed in the above memorial, and with the liberal and patriotic spirit which it breathed throughout, was compelled to leave to a subse-

quent session even the indirect assistance which we have thought it useful to record.\*

Patrick Henry was unanimously continued in the office of Governor, or Chief Magistrate of the Commonwealth, for one year from the end of the present session of Assembly; and Edmund Randolph reappointed Attorney General. John Page, Dudley Digges, John Blair, Bartholomew Dandridge, Thomas Walker, Nathaniel Harrison, Thomas Nelson Jun'r, and David Jameson, were severally chosen members of the Council of State, by the joint ballot of both Houses.

The extraordinary powers vested in the Executive by the last General Assembly, were continued until the end of the next session, the motives in which that measure had originated, operating at this time more powerfully than ever.—Soon after the meeting of the present Assembly, it had been recommended to the Governor to cause the clothing for the troops, the arms, and ammunition, together with the public records, to be removed to the interior of the country. The assailable situation of Williamsburg required this measure. The more secure seite of Richmond recommended that place for the purpose in view; it was accordingly fixed upon, and the objects which had excited the solicitude of the Assembly were transferred to that town, the destined metropolis of Virginia.

Such were the principal proceedings of this session of Assembly. It had commenced on the 5th of May, and it terminated on the 28th of June, when both Houses adjourned until the 3d Monday in October following, to meet at the Capitol in Williamsburg, or at such other place as the Governor and Council might appoint. In these proceedings, and in the mass of minor, yet interesting transactions on record, wisdom, concert, zeal, and diligence, are eminently observable. At this most critical juncture, the love of country called forth the most extraordinary talents and energies from the Legislators entrusted with the destinies of Virginia. Their ardent and unshaken devotion to their country's welfare and honor, did not shrink from difficulties. Calm, systematic, unambitious, disinterested, it was by virtue, harmony, firmness, and unwearied activity, that they were enabled to maintain a struggle so arduous, so terrific. In them, we retrace with delight and pride, the venerable features of the sages of antiquity, when legislation and philosophy, we might add heroism, were always connected, and formed but different parts of the same exalted characters.

About this time, two distinguished characters, who had lately arrived from France in South Carolina, with other

CHAP.  
X.

1777

P. Henry, is  
reappointed  
Governor.

Public re-  
cords remo-  
ved to Rich-  
mond.

Adjourn-  
ment of the  
Legislature,  
June 28.

Arrival of  
the Baro:

\* Incorporation was also solicited. It was granted in 1783.



CHAP.  
X.

1777

de Kalb, and  
of Marquis  
de la Fayette in A-  
merica.

July 25.

Gentlemen of inferior rank, passed through Virginia, on their way to the continental army. They were the Baron De Kalb, a German by birth, who had passed from the imperial into the French army, where he held the grade of Brigadier General; and the Marquis de la Fayette, since so celebrated on both sides of the Atlantic. The latter, adventurous, chivalric, glowing with youthful ardour, and military enthusiasm, had early attached himself to the cause of America, which he thought not only just, but lofty, glorious, sacred. In the disposition of this young nobleman, were conspicuously retraced, many of those amiable and generous features which characterized the ancient Knights of France, the good Joinville, the fearless and reproachless Bayard, & many others of deathless fame. Blessed with the gifts of fortune, the privileges of birth, and the endearments of conjugal love, the gallant La Fayette, still felt that uncontrollable, predominating impulse which urges noble minds to great personal achievements. He aspired to the honor of unsheathing his maiden sword in defence of an infant empire, cradled amid the ruins of oppression and tyranny. Towards the close of 1776, he had communicated to the American Commissioners his design to embark from his native Country for the United States, to whose service he was desirous to devote himself. This design they, at first, warmly encouraged. But when intelligence arrived in Europe that the Patriot army, broken, dispirited, and reduced to little more than two thousand undisciplined soldiers, was precipitately retreating through the Jerseys, before thirty thousand British Regulars, they candidly disclosed to him the perilous and apparently desperate situation of the cause which he was so eager to espouse. They likewise apprized him of their inability even to procure a vessel to forward his intentions. These frank and honourable representations, did not damp his enthusiasm. "Hitherto," he replied, "I have only cherished your cause—Now, I am going to serve it. The lower it is in the opinion of the people, the greater will be the effect of my departure; and since you cannot obtain a vessel, I shall purchase and fit out one to carry your dispatches to Congress, and myself to America." This assurance he speedily realized. An enterprize of this nature, by one of that age, rank and fortune, could not fail of exciting much sensation. The philanthropy and heroism of the Marquis were generally admired and extolled. The court of France, either to avoid giving further umbrage to the Cabinet of St. James, or really intending to prevent the execution of his design, forbade his departure. It is even reported that vessels were dispatched with orders to intercept him on his route. However this may be, tearing himself from the arms of a beloved consort, whose situation, endearing as it was, could not deter him from his no-



ble purpose, La Fayette embarked for America, landed in Charleston towards the middle of 1777. and, in company with the Baron De Kalb, and a few other military Gentlemen, proceeded to Philadelphia, and thence to the Continental army. Congress hailed his arrival with admiration, respect and gratitude. The rank of Brigadier General was soon conferred on him : he accepted the appointment, but with modifications which added new lustre to the splendour of his character. He insisted on being permitted to serve at his own expence, and on beginning his services as a volunteer. De Kalb was honoured by Congress with the rank of Major General.

The following Proclamation of Governor Henry, evinces the indefatigable efforts and insidious practices of the enemies of America.

“ Whereas I have been credibly informed that several persons are going about in different parts of this State, some of them in the guise of officers—engrossing the commodities of the country, at the most extravagant prices, with a view, as is supposed, of depreciating our currency, and discouraging people, moreover, by their false and injurious reports of the condition of our army, under his excellency, General Washington, and of the general posture of our affairs, from engaging in the American service : to the end, therefore, that all such persons may be vigilantly inspected, and particularly that they may be obliged to give that security for their friendship, which the act of the last session of Assembly requires of all persons coming within the State from any other of the United States, and that such of them as may appear to violate another act of a former session, by discouraging people from enlisting as soldiers, may be brought to condine punishment, I have thought proper by and with the advice of the Council, to issue this my proclamation, hereby requesting all officers both civil and military within this Commonwealth, and other subjects thereof to be aiding and assisting in this business, as they tender the welfare of their country, and as they shall answer the contrary at their peril.

“ Given under my hand this 8th day of July, in the 2nd Year of the Commonwealth, *Annoque Domini*. 1777.

P. HENRY.”

The anniversary of American Independence had been celebrated in Virginia and other States with demonstrations of joy and festivity. Impending dangers were forgotten amid the burst of patriotic excitement called forth by the return of the memorable day, which had ushered in the political birth of America.—But let us again turn our eyes to the momentous operations of the war.

Washington felt the importance of checking Burgoyne’s triumphant career. In his noble mind, personal considera-

CHAP.  
X.

1777

Proclamation of the Governor against certain dangerous persons

July.

Anniversary of Independence.

Washington reinforces

## CHAP.

## X.

1777  
the North-  
ern army.

Sullivan's  
excursion in  
to Staten I-  
sland.

August:

The British  
fleet appears  
in the Che-  
sapeake,

August 16.

Active mea-  
sures in Vir-  
ginia there-  
upon.

Howe lands  
below Elk-  
ton, August  
28.

tions never outweighed the public interest. He did not hesitate to weaken himself in order to reinforce the Northern army. Detachments from Peek's Kill, Morgan's corps of riflemen, and some troops from New York, were ordered to its aid. In the meanwhile, Lincoln and Arnold roused to arms the Eastern militia for co-operating purposes. Early in August, the almost unanimous vote of Congress placed the Northern department under the command of General Gates.

An excursion of Sullivan into Staten Island, which, though frustrated of its principal object, ended in bringing off several prisoners and a large quantity of baggage, was the only further event of any importance that marked the long interval of suspense during which the hostile fleet hovered, in menacing array, on the American coast, now apparently making for the Bay of Delaware, then steering Eastwardly, and finally, towards the middle of August, entering the Chesapeake.

The formidable means of injury annexed to this armament, the uncertainty of its destination, had, ever since its departure from Sandy-Hook, kept the assailable States on the alert. Virginia did not slumber. No sooner was intelligence received of the British fleet having entered the Capes, than the several corps of militia throughout the Commonwealth were ordered to march to Williamsburg, York, Portsmouth, and other points likely to attract the attention of the foe. This call was obeyed with cheerful and honourable alacrity. The militia rapidly assembled at their respective places of rendezvous; and Thomas Nelson, then county Lieutenant of York, was by the Governor and Council, immediately appointed Brigadier General, and Commander in Chief of the forces in the Commonwealth. Combining the advantages of education with those of fortune; military skill and gallantry with Legislative talents and patriotic virtues; affable, modest, generous, Nelson was universally esteemed and beloved. His appointment, the emoluments of which he nobly declined, whilst he eagerly assumed its arduous duties, inspired the people and the army with fresh confidence and animating hopes. The approach of a fleet, in itself tremendous, was viewed by resolute and free citizens, with a calm and serene eye.—In the mean time, suspected persons were carefully watched, and some of them confined or removed.

Virginia, however, was not, for the present, the destined theatre of action.

Steering up the Chesapeake, the enemy disembarked, on the 28th of August, at Cecil old Court House, in the State of Maryland. Thence Sir William Howe proceeded to Elkton, and from that place filing off to the left, advanced by the Upper route towards Philadelphia. Upon the first news of the enemy standing up the Chesapeake,

Washington had marched his army into Chester county, in Pennsylvania, and taken a strong position behind White-Clay creek. The advance of Sir William by the upper route, induced a movement to the right, and the American army was made to occupy the Eastern side of the Brandy-Wine. To prevent the passage of the enemy over this stream, was scarcely practicable, as it could be forded in three places within the compass of ten miles. But Washington was not disinclined to a general engagement, and this spot appeared to him propitious to a victory, which alone could now save Philadelphia. It being probable that the enemy would attempt to cross at Chad's ford, the chief opposition was directed to that point. Both above and below it, several corps were posted to guard other passes deemed less practicable.

CHAP.  
X.

1777

September  
11.

Battle of  
Brandywine

On the 11th of September, the whole British army appeared to be moving on the direct road to Chad's ford, and before ten o'clock, the advanced parties commenced a bloody prelude by sharp skirmishes. Soon after, Washington was informed that the enemy's army had been divided into two columns, one of which inferior in force, and encumbered with the baggage and provisions, was now pressing towards Chad's ford, whilst the other, a chosen and stronger corps, led on by Sir William in person, with Lord Cornwallis under him, was proceeding along the great valley road, South of the Brandy Wine, with a view of crossing at Tremble's and Jeffery's ford. This intelligence immediately suggested to Washington the superior advantage of striking at Knyphausen, whilst thus unsupported. Accordingly he resolved to pass over, with his center and his left, to the Western side of the intervening stream, for that important blow. Subsequent contradictory information, which rendered it uncertain whether the reported movement would be realized, or was only a feint, induced an alteration of this plan. The passage of the enemy at the upper fords was finally ascertained; but unfortunately it was now too late to make a disposition adequate to the force thus brought against the American right. This wing was first attacked; Washington and Greene, at the head of the reserve, could not reach the scene of action on that side, soon enough to prevent its defeat. They, however, efficiently checked the ardour of hostile pursuit. Soon after the beginning of the engagement on the right, Knyphausen, crossing at Chad's ford, also forced Wayne and Maxwell to retire, after a severe and bloody conflict. Fatigue and darkness put an end to a battle which left the British masters of the field. That battle was attended with severe loss on both sides;\* but it was not deemed de-

\* The force landed by Howe below Elkton has been estimated at 13,000



CHAP. X. cusive.—During the night, the defeated Americans retired to Chester, without further molestation.

1777

Much firmness and intrepidity was, on that day, displayed by several American corps. The Virginia troops did great honor to themselves, and to the State, whose patriotism and valour they represented. With the mention of the bloody conflict on the banks of the Brandy-Wine, History will ever connect, besides the pre-eminently illustrious names of Washington and Greene, those of Stephen, Sullivan, Maxwell, Proctor, Stephens, Weedon, Woodford, Wayne, Stewart, Marshall, Heth, Simms, Porterfield, Nelson, Lee, Mercer, Innis, Chilton, Blackwell, Peyton, Cooper, and many others, who all manifested a courage worthy of their noble cause and some of whom met with honourable wounds, and others with a glorious death—most of them Virginians.

In this action, the gallant La Fayette, the adventurous Pulaski, St. Ouary Fleury, and several other Foreigners, who had devoted themselves to the cause of America, gave signal proofs of their military worth.—The dauntless Pole rode to reconnoitre the enemy, within pistol shot of their front, and La Fayette, wounded in the leg, refused to abandon the soldier's post. Fleury had a horse killed under him.

Whilst Sir William, neglecting to improve his late advantage, indulged in repose on the field of battle, Washington quickly removed from Chester—crossed the Skuylkill—and after allowing his troops one single day to snatch some portion of necessary refreshment, recrossed that river at Swede's ford, and proceeded on the Lancaster-road, eager for a new conflict. The defeat on the Brandy-Wine had broken the spirit neither of the people, nor of the army. An idea prevailed that Howe had sustained a loss equal to that of Washington, and gained only the ground. Congressional Debates were continued at Philadelphia, until the 18th—in short, the Republic was not despaired of. Reinforcements were solemnly urged, and speedily put in motion—danger and deliverance seemed to advance in front.—After a pause of three days, the enemy, quitting the Banks of the Brandy-Wine, directed his march to the upper fords of the Schuylkill.—Washington proceeded to meet him—awful encounter! On its fate depended, perhaps, the liberties of America—already light parties had opened the momentous drama, when a furious tempest, accompanied with torrents of rain, dispersed the embattled actors.—The arms and ammunition of the Ameri-

September  
15,

---

men: Washington might have with him about 17,000 effectives, including militia. The loss, American and British, was variously computed—Howe says the Americans lost 300 killed—600 wounded—400 prisoners, and the Royal army, 100 killed, and 400 wounded.

1777

Howe enters  
Philadel-  
phia.  
September  
26.

cans were so much damaged, in consequence of this tempest, that the design of engaging the enemy was, for the present relinquished. The distressed situation of the army, now encamped at Pottsgrove, left Philadelphia to its impending fate ; and, after some minor operations, among which we notice the surprize and defeat of a detachment under Wayne, by the British Major General Grey, Sir William pursued his route across the Schuylkill, and on the 26th of September, took possession of Philadelphia.—His masterly tactics have been greatly extolled by British Historians. It is true that, on the Brandy-Wine, he deceived Washington by a skilful movement ; but he neglected to mature into a complete triumph the advantage of that day. Had he immediately advanced upon Chester with his superior force, how could Washington have escaped, with the Delaware on his right, the Schuylkill in his front, and an enemy flushed with victory in his rear and on his left ? The best answer to the detractors of Washington, is this obvious fact : In an open country, equally destitute of natural and artificial defences, Sir William, at the head of an army superior in numbers, arms, and every other military requisite, except courage, employed nearly THIRTY DAYS in an advance of less than SIXTY MILES,\* and Washington was his antagonist.

---

\* For a confutation of illiberal British censure, see Marshall's life of Washington. Henry Lee, in his memoirs of the summer campaign, has ably developed the errors of Sir William—and their probable cause.

## CHAPTER XI.

---

*Events on the Lakes—Activity of General Schuyler—St. Leger invests Fort Schuyler—Victory of Bennington—Retreat of St. Leger—Effects of Indian barbarities—Speech of Lord Chatham against the employment of Savages—Engagement at Still-Water—Mount Defiance and Mount Hope are recovered—Second engagement with Burgoyne—Noble instance of conjugal affection—Burgoyne retires to Saratoga—Surrenders himself and his army—Effects of this surrender, in America and in Europe—Expedition of Clinton up the North river—Vaughn Curns Esopus—Events near Philadelphia—Battle of Germantown—Attack on Fort Mercer and on Fort Mifflin, unsuccessful—Fort Mifflin evacuated, also Fort Mercer—Delays in reinforcing Washington—Washington retires into Winter Quarters—Meeting of the General Assembly—Act for recruiting the Virginia regiments in Continental service—Act for speedily clothing the army—for procuring provisions—for raising money—Act for sequestering British property—Courts of Justice opened again—High Court of Chancery and general Court established—Articles of Confederation approved by Virginia—Other Legislative measures—Resolutions relative to the Western unappropriated lands.*

### CHAP. XI.

---

1777

We have glanced at the rapid and victorious progress of Lieutenant General Burgoyne on the side of the Lakes. That renowned successor of Sir Guy Carleton had early issued from Canada, at the head of a numerous, well disciplined, well supplied army, reinforced by large hordes of Indian auxiliaries,\* and proud of counting among its Chiefs

---

\* It has been asserted that the scruples of Carleton in respect to arming the Indians, induced the Ministers to supercede him. If so, they must have expected a readier compliance from Burgoyne. The latter, however, who seems to have been uncommonly tender on the score of honourable soldieryship, has taken considerable pains to clear his character from any participation in the barbarities committed by his savage allies. At the war-feast, which he gave them on the western banks of Lake Champlain, he endeavoured, he says, to mitigate the usual ferocity of their mode of warfare, by recommending to them to confine their fury to armed opponents, and to spare old age, infancy, the helpless sex and prisoners. He even promised rewards for the latter, and intimated that he should not pay for any scalps, except those of enemies slain in battle. But how was he to distinguish such scalps from those of unarmed, defenceless victims? Let facts speak for themselves.—In his inflated, minatory manifesto of the 29th of June, we find the following words: "Let not people be led to disregard it (an invitation to join the royal standard, &c.) by considering their distance from the immediate situation of my camp. I have but to give stretch to the In-



1777

General Philips of the artillery, Brigadier General Frazer, Powel, Hamilton and Specht, and Major General Riedesel. After publishing a manifesto no less pompous than impolitic, he invested Ticonderoga and its dependencies. Unequal to their defence, St. Clair who commanded in that quarter, was compelled to retire in some confusion.† His troops moved towards the Hudson, with sullen resentment, alternately against their own and the enemy's General. Frazer and Riedesel, detached in pursuit of St. Clair, successfully engaged his rear, headed by Warner, near Castletown; whilst Burgoyne, closely pressing on another portion of the retreating Americans, up the South river, forced Colonel Long to evacuate in rapid succession, Skeensborough and Fort Anne, and to seek the protection of Fort Edward. The details of these operations are eminently interesting, but do not fall within the scope of particular history.

Activity of  
General  
Schuyler.

The fortune of America now wore, in that quarter, a gloomy aspect. Burgoyne, however, found it necessary to make a pause at Skeensborough. Independently of want of repose and refreshment, several corps of his army were scattered and intermingled. To re-assemble and reorganize them, demanded some time. This interval was diligently and judiciously improved by the American Major General Schuyler. He omitted no exertion to superadd artificial impediments to the natural difficulties of Burgoyne's future route. The bridges were broken down; the roads, or rather path-ways through the forest, rendered impassable by felled trees which lay across them with interlocked boughs; the navigation of Wood Creek as far as Fort Anne, totally obstructed; the cattle of the neighbouring country removed from the enemy's reach, and new supplies of men, provisions and ammunition collected at the point of defence. These obstructions, added to the natural asperities and intersections of the country, so much retarded the progress of Burgoyne's cumbrous army, that although it met on its march with very little molestation from the Americans, it did not reach Fort Edward, on the

dian forces under my direction, and they amount to thousands, to overtake the enemies of Great Britain." If by this threat, no more than usual military rigour was implied, why so emphatically designate the Indians as its ministers?—With the first hostilities, indiscriminate pillage and murder by the savages, commenced. Royalists and Patriots, men, women and children, straggling and wounded soldiers of both armies, were robbed and butchered. Burgoyne indignantly repelled the charge of Gates in respect to the lovely, unfortunate, Miss Macrae—Yet he suffered her murderer to live—But the Indians cannot be restrained—Barbarians! You confess this, and you employ them!—Is the wretch who applies the fatal torch and conflagrates cities, excused by saying "fire is an ungovernable agent!"

† This evacuation gave great dissatisfaction, at first; afterwards Schuyler and St. Clair were tried, and honourably acquitted.

CHAP.  
XI.

1777

St. Leger  
invests Fort  
Schuyler.

upper branches of the Hudson, till twenty-five days after its halt at Skeensborough. The sickly state of the American troops rendered that post untenable. Accordingly, on the enemy's approach, Schuyler retired over the Hudson to Saratoga, and thence to Still-Water near the mouth of the Mohawk. At Fort Edward Burgoyne was again compelled to halt, for the purpose of procuring from Fort George, provisions, boats, artillery, and other requisites, for the part of the expedition still before him.

Whilst Burgoyne was pursuing this route, a detachment of his army composed of Canadians, Loyalists and European Regulars, under Colonel St. Leger, and of a considerable body of Indians, under Sir John Johnson, penetrated by way of Lake Oneida and Wood-Creek, to the banks of the Mohawk. The leader of the Indian part of this corps was the son of Sir William Johnson, who had been a rich proprietor and resident in the Mohawk country, in the Colony of New-York, and long acted as royal superintendant of Indian affairs. Sir William had married a Mohawk savage wife, and acquired and long exercised over that and the neighbouring tribes, an influence which was supposed to have descended to his son. To this circumstance the latter was indebted for the rank of Brigadier General in Burgoyne's army, and the special direction of the savages. This detachment soon appeared before an important post, known in succession by the name of Fort Stanwix and that of Fort Schuyler, and situated on the river Mohawk. The Fort was invested, and a surrender haughtily demanded; its commander Col. Gansevoort, intimated a resolution to defend himself to the last extremity. Gen. Herkemer who commanded the militia of Tryon county, made an unsuccessful attempt to relieve the garrison. His design to penetrate into the Fort was discovered by St. Leger, who placed a strong body of regulars and Indians in ambuscade, on his intended route. Whilst too incautiously advancing at the head of his party, Herkemer was intercepted with considerable loss, notwithstanding a most gallant defence on his part, and a vigorous sortie made in his favour by Lieutenant Colonel Willet, who unexpectedly fell at the enemy's camp, spread alarm and confusion around him, and returned into the Fort loaded with trophies of victory. After the defeat of Herkemer, a surrender of the Fort was again demanded, and in more peremptory terms than before. An appeal was made to those terrors which the Indian scalping knife is always supposed to inspire—further resistance, it was observed, would heighten the resentment of the Indians to irrepressible phrenzy—With equal modesty and firmness, Gansevoort answered that he would defend his sacred trust to the very last extremity, regardless of the barbarity of the foe, and of the threatened consequences. Apprehensive of some movement from Schuy-

CHAP.  
XI.

1777

Victory at  
Bennington,  
August 16.

ler for the relief of the Fort, St. Leger urged Burgoyne to further operations. But the latter was now assailed by difficulties and dangers, no less perplexing than they had been unforeseen. In an attempt to seize large continental magazines at Bennington, a considerable detachment of his troops, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Baum, had been almost entirely destroyed, together with a reinforcement under Lieutenant Colonel Breyman.

Brigadier General Starke, with a body of militia from New Hampshire, had fortunately reached the threatened depot a little before Baum made his appearance. Uniting his brave militia with the remains of Warner's continental regiment, he attacked the enemy before the latter could complete the intrenchments, in which, upon finding Bennington better protected than had been imagined, he was hastening to fortify himself, until a reinforcement, demanded by express, should arrive. The attack was vigorous and successful; Baum was made prisoner, and most of his corps killed or taken. The reinforcement under Breyman was slowly advancing, retarded by the badness of the roads, and other accidental obstacles. It met some of the fugitives, precipitately retreating before pursuing parties of militia, rallied them and restored the action. The advantages of the day, and the magazines themselves were now endangered; fortunately, Warner came up, at this critical moment, with his brave Continentals; and being soon supported by the re-assembling militia, forced Breyman to retire, with the loss of his baggage and artillery. In this action one thousand stand of arms and nine hundred swords fell into the hands of the victors. The loss of the enemy in killed, and prisoners, was considerable. Nor was this victory a solitary ray of prosperous fortune. Fort Schuyler made an obstinate defence. The protracted duration of the siege, a report that Arnold was advancing on the besiegers with a formidable body of regulars, and the alarm naturally produced by the affair at Bennington, powerfully operated on the minds of the Indians, and overcame those restraints which had hitherto checked the habitual fickleness and treachery of their character. They resolved to withdraw. In vain St. Leger and Sir John exerted their joint influence to detain them; they decamped, and their desertion created an absolute necessity for raising the siege and precipitately retreating. This was attended with the loss on the part of the British of all their camp equipage and stores: During the retreat the Indians exercised on their employers themselves, their murderous fury. By them, such soldiers as could not keep up with the line of march, were inhumanly massacred.

• Retreat of  
St. Leger,  
August 22.

Two events so fortunate, and almost simultaneous, electrified the public mind. Confidence was restored, hope re-



CHAP.  
XI.

1777

Effects of In-  
dian barba-  
ries.Speech of  
Lord Chat-  
ham against  
the employ-  
ment of Sa-  
vages.

vived, enterprize stimulated.—Accordingly, when, at this very time, General Gates, whose appointment to succeed Schuyler we have already noticed, arrived at the scene of action, he found the regulars and the militia animated by a cheerful active, emulous spirit, to which their reliance on his zeal and abilities gave additional vigour. Schuyler, though keenly alive to a sense of unmerited odium and disgrace, nobly sacrificed to the common cause, his private feelings, and continued to display, in the service of his country, the indefatigable diligence which characterized all his undertakings.

Among the causes by which opposition was nerved, and the happy termination of the Northern campaign prepared, may justly be ranked the blaze of resentment kindled by Indian enormities. The employment of savage auxiliaries was loudly reprobated, even in England. So long as feelings of humanity, a regard for the dignity of the species, and a taste for the pathos and sublimity of genuine eloquence shall prevail among men, upon reading the answer of the noble Chatham to Lord Suffolk, in relation to this subject, commingled emotions of contempt for the advocate of the base, abominable policy, and of admiration for its opponent, must fill, overflow, the heart.\* Not satisfied with recommending the measure as expedient and necessary, Lord Suffolk contended that it was allowable on principle, “as it was perfectly justifiable, he observed, to use all the means that God and nature had put into our hands.†” This excited the indignation of Lord Chatham, who suddenly rose, and in a burst of eloquence, worthy of the subject and of himself, pathetically exclaimed: “I am astonished, shocked to hear such principles confessed; to hear them avowed in this house, or even in this country. My Lords, I did not intend to have encroached again on your attention, but I cannot repress my indignation. I feel myself impelled to speak. My Lords, we are called upon as members of this house, as men, as christians, to protest against such horrible barbarity. That God and nature have put into our hands! what ideas of God and nature that noble Lord may entertain, I know not; but I know that such detestable principles are equally

\* It was objected to Chatham, that in the preceding war, of which he had the direction, the Indians had been employed. But supposing him to have authorised that measure, he could only be charged with a change of sentiment, highly honourable in such a case. The objection, after all, did not affect the main point—and it was, perhaps, because that great man had then acquired the melancholy certitude of imbred and uncontrollable Indian ferocity, that he now opposed a similar policy.

† Though the debate was subsequent to this expedition, the speech of Chatham bore upon it. This quotation, therefore, is no substantial anachronism. The debate took place in November, 1777

CHAP.  
XI.

1777

“ abhorrent to religion and humanity. What! to attribute  
 “ the sacred sanction of God and nature to the massacres  
 “ of the Indian scalping knife! to the cannibal savage tor-  
 “ turing, murdering, devouring, drinking the blood of his  
 “ mangled victims! such notions shock every precept of  
 “ morality, every feeling of humanity, every sentiment of  
 “ honour. These abominable principles, and this more a-  
 “ bominable avowal of them, demand the most decisive in-  
 “ dignation. I call upon that right reverend, and this  
 “ most learned bench, to vindicate the religion of their  
 “ God, to support the justice of their country. I call upon  
 “ the Bishops to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their  
 “ lawn, upon the judges to interpose the purity of their  
 “ ermine to save us from this pollution. I call upon the  
 “ honour of your Lordships to reverence the dignity of your  
 “ ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the  
 “ spirit and humanity of my country, to vindicate the nati-  
 “ onal character. I invoke the genius of the constitution.  
 “ From the tapestry that adorns these walls, the immor-  
 “ tal ancestor of this noble Lord frowns with indignation at  
 “ the disgrace of his country. In vain did he defend the li-  
 “ berty and establish the religion of Britain against the ty-  
 “ ranny of Rome, if these worse than Popish cruelties and  
 “ inquisitorial practices, are established among us. To send  
 “ forth the merciless cannibal thirsting for blood!—A-  
 “ gainst whom?—Your protestant brethren—To lay waste  
 “ their country—to desolate this dwellings, and extirpate  
 “ their race and name, by the aid and instrumentality of  
 “ these horrible hell-hounds of war! Spain can no longer  
 “ boast pre-eminence of barbarity. She armed herself with  
 “ blood hounds to extirpate the wretched natives of Mex-  
 “ ico, but we, more ruthless, loose these dogs of war a-  
 “ gainst our country-men in America, endeared to us by ev-  
 “ ery tie that should sanctify humanity. My Lords, I so-  
 “ lemnly call upon your Lordships, and upon every order  
 “ of men in the State to stamp upon this infamous proce-  
 “ dure the indelible stigma of the public abhorrence.  
 “ More particularly I call upon the holy prelates of our  
 “ religion to do away this iniquity; let them perform a  
 “ lustration to purify their country from this deep and  
 “ deadly sin. My Lords, I am old and weak, and at pre-  
 “ sent unable to say more, but my feelings and indigna-  
 “ tion were too strong to have said less. I could not  
 “ have slept this night in my bed, nor reposed my head  
 “ upon my pillow, without giving this vent to my eternal  
 “ abhorrence of such enormous and preposterous princi-  
 “ ples.”—But in vain did the venerable Chatham make to  
 the religion, the justice, the honour, the humanity of his  
 country, this fervid, this powerful appeal. The Indians  
 were employed, and the measure proved no less detrimen-



CHAP.  
XI.

1777

tal than disgraceful to the Royal cause.\* It wrought to a phrenzy the spirit of the Americans, and disgusted the Loyalists themselves, who not unfrequently were its victims. Of this the deplorable fate of an unfortunate young Lady, betrothed to a British officer, and on the eve of marrying him, offers a heart-rending instance. This melancholy fact, we will relate in the words of General Gates.

“Miss M'Crae, a young Lady, lovely to the sight, of virtuous character, and amiable disposition, engaged to an officer of the Royal army, was, with other women and children, taken out of a house near Fort Edward, and there scalped, and mangled in a most shocking manner. The miserable fate of Miss M'Crae was particularly aggravated, by being dressed to receive her promised husband; but met her murderer, employed by the British General.”

In justice to that General, however, let us listen to his own statement.—“The fall of Miss M'Crae, wrote Burgoyne, is as sincerely abhorred and lamented by me, as it can be by the tenderest of her friends. The fact was no premeditated barbarity. On the contrary, two Chiefs who had brought her off for the purpose of security, not of violence to her person, disputed which should be her guard; and in a fit of savage passion in one from whose hands she was

---

\* We dwell on this subject, because it deeply interests humanity; nor is this interest confined to past events, or present considerations. In the course of time, civilization will spread over the immense regions stretching between the Lakes, the great Western streams and the Pacific Ocean. Already, these regions have been partially explored, with a view to future enterprise. Already national rivalry has sounded the alarm. As the subjects of different Governments make their respective advances into the Indian countries, one of three things must happen, in respect to the aborigines. These must be either civilized and amalgamated with the new comers, or totally extirpated, or, as has been the case heretofore, only dispossessed and propelled North-Westwardly. The civilization and assimilation of the Indians, though not impossible (the perfectibility of man and historical testimony, encourage the hopes of the benevolent on this head) are very difficult—their extirpation if practicable would be infamous—it is probable, then, that dispossession, by various means, will go on for ages, still leaving to the progressing settlers, Indian neighbours—a race whose inculcated ferocity and rapaciousness may increase, as their indiscriminate resentments against all whites most certainly will. Hence, when employed in wars eventually arising between the Governments whose subjects will people the present wilds of North America, savage auxiliaries will have no better motives of action than they have had at any time—a thirst for blood—a love of plunder—and a radical hatred to the whites in general. Their past indicates their future conduct.—How desirable it is, then, to introduce into the law of nations a new principle, viz: *that in no contest whatever between civilized nations, the aid of savages shall be employed!* Humanity would gain considerably by the assent of nations to this principle, and belligerents would lose little or nothing. The latest posterity would bless the memory of the present age, if England, Spain America &c. should, ere long, solemnly establish, on a firm basis, such an improvement in the condition of man. The almost universal detestation of such alliances and their effects, induces a belief that nations will soon consecrate some such principle.



CHAP.  
XI.

1777

Sept. 17.

Engage-  
ment at Still  
Water.

snatched, the unhappy woman became the victim.\*—Be this as it may, the murderer was suffered to live—And the reasons alledged by Burgoyne in justification of this indulgence are unsatisfactory. The blood of the ruthless assassin could alone expiate his guilt—or rather the guilt was entire with those who had armed his ruffian hand!

Notwithstanding his unfavourable prospects, Burgoyne seemed to spurn the idea of a timely retreat: seduced by delusive hopes of renewed and decisive victory, he eagerly sought a general engagement. Gates, at the head of all the Continentals destined for the northern army, and reinforced by large accessions of militia, pressed forward, with a resolution to meet the enemy, and determine, by closing with his appeal, the fate of the campaign. He took post at Still-Water, and the two armies were now within four miles of each other. On the 19th of September, Burgoyne marched in full force against the American left, the command of which had been entrusted to Arnold. With his brave corps of Virginian riflemen, Morgan ever enterprising, ever useful, advanced to attack and harrass the front of the British, and soon drove in their pickets. These were succeeded by larger corps, and Morgan, in his turn, compelled to draw back; but he was quickly supported, and this skirmish brought on an engagement in which nearly the whole of the two armies participated, and which ended considerably to the advantage of the Americans. They had opened the attack—maintained their ground—destroyed of the enemy many more than they had themselves lost, and accomplished their main object by effectually checking the future progress of Burgoyne. Add to all this, that the Indians, finding in Morgan an invincible and galling adversary, whom neither their stratagems, nor their terrors could reach, whilst they were made severely to feel his skill and prowess, abandoned the British camp in considerable numbers—a defection which was soon attended by the desertion of most all the Canadians and Provincials, leaving to Burgoyne little more than his European troops.

During these transactions, bodies of militia, detached by General Lincoln, had recovered Mount Defiance, Mount Hope, and the old French lines, liberated several American prisoners, and destroyed a vast number of the enemy's boats.

Mount Defiance and Mount Hope are recovered.

Every circumstance threatened Burgoyne with approaching destruction. Each day witnessed some deduction from his effective force, and from his scanty stores: nor could either of these be recruited. Gates, on the contrary, was

\* Miss M'Crae's lover, Mr. Jones, had promised a barrel of rum to the person who should bring her safe to him. Two Indians of different tribes, undertook the task—disputed about the reward—and one of them, to prevent his companion from obtaining it to the exclusion of himself, tomahawked the unfortunate Lady. See Gordon, vol. 2, page 544.

CHAP.  
XI.

1777

Second en-  
gagement  
with Bur-  
goyne.Noble in-  
stance of  
conjugal af-  
fection.Burgoyne  
retires to  
Saratoga.

hourly strengthened by an influx of militia, and his supplies were proportionally augmented. His only anxiety was, lest the enemy should be able to effect a retreat, or to make a rapid advance down the Hudson, where Sir Henry Clinton had been successful in a movement, evidently undertaken for the relief of Burgoyne. Nineteen days elapsed without any further effusion of blood, except in the light war of advanced parties. During this interval, Gates was actively employed in seizing on all the strong posts in the rear of the British, in extending his right, and fortifying his left. The same interval was spent by Burgoyne in anxious, but fruitless expectation of the promised succours. Retreat or victory now became the only alternative in prospect, and either victory or retreat presented difficulties nearly insuperable. On the 7th of October, however, he made a vigorous effort to extricate himself from so perilous a situation. That effort was baffled by the masterly dispositions of Gates, especially against the enemy's left, and by the bravery of the whole American army. The British, repulsed in every point, were compelled to seek the protection of their lines, part of which was stormed by Arnold, and another part occupied by Brooks. In this action, Burgoyne lost, beside a large quantity of baggage and artillery, a great number of men and officers, some of distinguished rank, such as Frazer and Breyman. Arnold, who in the same engagement displayed a valour bordering on rashness, was severely wounded: the next day, General Lincoln, whilst riding in company with General Gates, also received a wound in the leg, from a random shot of the enemy. It was at this time, that Lady Ackland gave a noble example of conjugal tenderness: her husband, the British Major Ackland, had been wounded, and taken prisoner; that amiable woman, a model of affection and virtue worthy of eternal praise, requested permission to attend him and share his captivity. She experienced from Gates that respect, that delicate attention to which her rank, her sex, her loveliness, and her worth entitled her.

During the night which followed this conflict, Burgoyne retired to a stronger position. To insure subsequent and decisive victory, Gates had only to cut off his adversary's retreat. Measures taken with a view to this, compelled Burgoyne precipitately to regain the heights of Saratoga, leaving behind him his hospital and part of his baggage. His retreat to that post was marked with lawless pillage and wanton conflagration—a conduct thus aiming at the ruin of those who could not be conquered, betrayed the vindictive malice of Monks\* more than the generosity of soldiers. An intense rain prevented Gates from hotly pur-

---

\* See a letter from Gates to Burgoyne, dated Saratoga, Oct. 11, 1777.



1777

sming the foe ; but he took care to render impracticable the transportation of artillery and baggage towards Canada, harrassing, taking or destroying, at the same time, the boats which contained the enemy's scanty provisions.

During the active hostilities of which we have been taking a cursory survey, the militia rendered infinite service—continually hanging upon the flanks and rear of the enemy—intercepting his convoys—destroying his magazines—beating in his guards—and making numerous prisoners.

The situation of Burgoyne had become truly deplorable. All his proud anticipations had vanished ; all his laurels withered. The haughty leader who, in a pompous and minatory proclamation, had proscribed the best blood of the country, was now at the mercy of its inhabitants. His cruel, impious threats, that, *by the blessing of God*, he would extend far and near the influence of his arms, were recoiling on his own head ; his boasted ministers of royal vengeance, the Indians, had deserted him, and of the ten thousand men whom he had brought out of Canada, he now scarcely counted one half ; he had in store only three days provisions, upon short allowance. In this desperate state of his affairs, Burgoyne, at last, resolved to retrace his steps by a forced march ; merely with what baggage and provisions the soldiers could carry on their backs. But even of this resource he was now deprived. American vigilance had occluded all the passes through which his route lay. The absolute necessity of a surrender, unless he should, in frantic despair, rush on the enemy's sword and bayonet, now, like a grim and terrific vision, stared him in the face. For a surrender, upon honourable terms, he, therefore, sent proposals to General Gates. The latter demanded, at first, that the British army should surrender themselves prisoners of war, and ground their arms in their encampment. Burgoyne and his officers unanimously rejected these terms, though strictly justified by the relative situation of the two armies ; and Gates, who knew how to respect, in a prostrate enemy, this high sense of personal and national honour, and was, moreover, under some apprehension of sudden and efficient relief to Burgoyne, from Sir Henry Clinton, whose masterly manœuvres wore an imposing aspect, receded with equal prudence and magnanimity, from the rigour of his original conditions. It was ultimately agreed, by a Convention signed on the 17th of October, that the British army, after marching out of their intrenchments with all the honours of war, should lay down their arms, and not serve against the United States, until exchanged, a passage to Great-Britain being, in the mean time, allowed them.

He surren-  
ders himself  
and his army

October 17.

The generosity of Gates was no less conspicuous in victory than his skill and prowess had been in battle. He carried delicacy so far as to keep his troops within their



CHAP.  
XI.

1777

own encampment, whilst, according to the articles of capitulation, the British soldiers were marching out of their lines, and piling their arms. The royal troops, who had only one day's salt meat remaining, were immediately supplied with bread, and other palatable food. The sick and wounded received the most humane attention; and Burgoyne was furnished with a correct return of the American army, as a means of justifying to his government and to the world the unavoidable surrender of his own.

Burgoyne had issued from Canada with about 10,000 men: at the time of his capitulation, his total force amounted to 5,752 persons of all descriptions, of whom only 3,500 effectives. The army under Gates consisted of 9,093 Continentals, of whom 2,665 either sick, or on furlough, and of 4,129 militia. Of this last force, however, the amount was ever fluctuating. Beside the men included in the Convention, the British lost a superb train of brass artillery, seven thousand muskets, clothing for seven thousand soldiers, with a large quantity of tents, and other military stores. Ticonderoga was immediately abandoned to the victors. The British prisoners were marched to Boston: the magnanimous Gates seemed to have breathed into his men the same generous spirit which animated himself: when, on commencing their march, these prisoners passed through the centre of the American army, no insulting word, or even gesture, escaped the conquerors. The whole scene, was decorous, solemn, affecting. At the sight of a fallen, disarmed, distressed enemy, sympathy appeared to supercede resentment; and for a few moments, the joy which military triumphs naturally inspire, was humanely repressed.

Effects of  
this surren-  
der

In America,

In Europe.

The effects of an event so splendid and important, were incalculable. In America, the capture of Burgoyne effaced the memory of anterior misfortunes, and opened bright prospects for the future. It inspirited the army, nerved the exertions of Congress, and diffused confidence through the whole nation. Gates, Morgan,\* Arnold, Starke, and their gallant associates were hailed as the deliverers of their country. The thanks of Congress were voted to the General and the whole army: Gates received as a special mark of public gratitude, a gold medal commemorative of the glorious event.† In Europe the catastrophe at Saratoga also produced consequences of great moment. The northern campaign, and the brilliant suc-

\* Morgan, who so splendidly contributed to the fall of Burgoyne, gave to a handsome mansion-house, which he erected on his farm, in Frederick County, Virg. the name of *Saratoga*. For details on that gallant leader, see Appendix to Lee's *Memoirs of the Southern Campaign*, vol. 1.

† See Appendix, No. 23.

cess which attended its early stages, had created in England proud and sanguine hopes. The disappointment was proportionately keen. In their despondency, the ministers, receding from their original ground, resorted, but too late, to conciliatory measures. In France, the oscillations of a wavering policy was ultimately fixed by that event; and the conclusion of the alliance so anxiously wished by America, and viewed with so much alarm by Great-Britain, happily accelerated. But let us complete our cursory survey of prominent military operations, in 1777.

It was not without cause that Gates had entertained some fears of an attempt on the side of New York, for the relief of Burgoyne. Undeterred by natural difficulties, and artificial obstructions of incalculable magnitude, deeply versed in military stratagem, in conception bold, in execution rapid and indefatigable, Sir Henry Clinton entirely deceived General Putnam, to whose vigilance and courage the key of the Upper Hudson had been confided—on the 6th of October, he stormed Forts Clinton and Montgomery, whose fall was soon followed by the evacuation of Peek's Kill, and Forts Constitution and Independence. The water defences, impregnable as they appeared, experienced a similar fate. The immense boom, extending across the river, the strong and ponderous chain in its front, the frigates and galleys behind it, proved unavailing barriers. Large stores became the prey either of the enemy, or of the flames. After burning Continental Village, the British General Vaughan proceeded to Kingston or Esopus, a small and defenceless Town, then chiefly a depot of women and children. This he also reduced to ashes: other unprovoked, unprofitable barbarities marked, on both sides of the Hudson, the progress of the detachment under Vaughan, and drew from Gates the following impressive letter: "With unexampled cruelty," wrote the American General, "you have reduced the fine village of Kingston to ashes, and most of the inhabitants to ruin. I am informed you also continue to ravage and plunder all before you, on both sides of the river. Is it thus your King's Generals think to make converts to the royal cause? It is no less surprising than true that the measures they adopt to serve their master have quite the contrary effect. Their cruelty establishes the act of independency upon the broad basis of the general resentment of the people. Able Generals, and much elder officers than you can pretend to be, are now by the fortune of war, in my hands. Their fortune may one day be yours, when, Sir, it may not be in the power of any thing human to save you from the just revenge of an injured people." Between the taking of the Highland Forts and the conflagration of Esopus, seven days had elapsed: much time was subsequently consumed in predatory operations. Thus were the valuable stores at Albany

Expedition  
of Clinton  
up the  
North River

Vaughan  
burns  
Esopus

CHAP. preserved; and Burgoyne debarred of those succours which  
 XI. it was the principal object of this expedition to convey.  
 After the catastrophe of the 17th, Gates rapidly marched  
 his victorious troops down the Hudson. At his approach,  
 1777 Vaughan, who had so ill executed the orders of Clinton, re-  
 tired to New-York, burning, as he moved down the river,  
 the Forts of which the British had possessed themselves.

Events near  
 Philadel-  
 phia.

Whilst the banks of the Hudson were the theatre of these momentous events, considerable activity was also displayed on those of the Delaware. The capture of Philadelphia had produced no decisive effect in favour of the British arms. Far from depending on the fall of a few large cities, the fate of America could not be decided even by the subjugation of a few States. The vitality of the new body politic did not center in any one point; it was diffused through all its parts. No single blow, however severe, could destroy it. What the resources of the Union wanted in intensity, was amply compensated by an extension of means capable of baffling the protracted efforts of the most obstinate hostility. Undismayed, therefore, by the late success of General Howe, the Congress calmly resumed their deliberations at Lancaster; and Washington took, on the Western side of Skippack creek, an advantageous position, which enabled him not only to protect the impediments opposed to the British fleet in the Delaware, but also to strike the main body of the enemy, encamped at Germantown, should a propitious opportunity invite the enterprize and spirit of the American army.

On the 24th of September, the British fleet, leaving a few ships in the Chesapeake, to annoy the exposed settlements, and intercept inward bound vessels, was seen to clear the Capes of Virginia. Its destination evidently was Philadelphia. Separated from the ships, and unpossessed of the navigation of the Delaware, Sir William Howe must necessarily be exposed to a distressing want of supplies, and compelled to relinquish his conquest, in order to avoid a worse fate. Hence, to open a passage for the fleet now became the predominating object of the British General; nor was the American Chief less bent on preventing the contemplated junction. For this purpose, several measures had already been pursued. Near the place where the Schuylkill unites with the Delaware, several ranges of frames, composed of heavy transverse beams, firmly joined, and pointed with iron, had been sunk in the channel of the river; and to protect these obstructions, two Forts had been erected; one on Mud-Island, a low, humid scite, the result of alluvion, and the other on Red Bank, a high bluff of the Jersey shore. The first was called Fort Mifflin, after the General of that name; the other, Fort Mercer, in honour to the hero of Princeton. Near these were stationed row-galleys, mounted with heavy cannon,



CHAP.  
XI.

1777

floating batteries, armed ships of various sizes, and rafts. Three miles lower down, other chevaux-de-frise (from analogy that name was given to the frames described above) had been fixed across the stream, under the protection of a battery, erected on a point of land called Billingsport, also on the Jersey side. This post, yet unfinished, and guarded by militia only, was abandoned at the approach of a superior hostile force, under the command of Colonel Stirling.—The river obstructions at that point yielded to the extraordinary and persevering efforts of Captain Hammond, who had already ascended the Delaware with part of the British fleet. Philadelphia was occupied by Lord Cornwallis with four regiments of grenadiers—another part of the British army was stationed at Wilmington and Chester—Sir William now detached a numerous corps to protect convoys of provisions into Philadelphia. Washington remarked with pleasure this division of strength—the propitious moment had come to strike his incautious adversary.

An attack was, therefore, determined upon: its plan was daring and extensive, but it required a concert and symmetry of action scarcely attainable. The wings, the rear, the front of the enemy, were to be simultaneously assailed. During the night which preceded the 4th of October, the American army advanced in several divisions. Although the movements of the different columns wanted that harmony which had been originally contemplated, fortune smiled at first on the American arms. Unable to resist the impetuosity of the assault, the British were giving way on all sides, when one of their Chiefs, Colonel Musgrave, threw himself with six companies of his regiment, into a large stone house. This broke the pursuit of the assailants, who injudiciously halted to reduce this accidental fortress. Two other circumstances chiefly contributed to wrest from Washington the victory within his grasp—A thick fog mantled every object, and concealed from his superintending eye the movements both of friends and foes; and the country abounded with palisades and enclosures, which unavoidably retarded and dispersed the pursuers.—Much confusion was created among the Americans by these causes, as well as by a want of experience and discipline—Thus did the British recover from the early terrors of the unexpected blow, and reverse the fate of the day.—The Americans however, made good their retreat in perfect order.

This affair, though in many respects unfortunate, was productive of beneficial consequences. The undisciplined, but brave defenders of America had seen the veterans of Britain and Germany yielding to their impetuous valour. They had penetrated to the very center of the hostile en-

Battle of  
German-  
Town.  
October 4.

CHAP.  
XI.

1777

campment, and spread there confusion and dismay. This was an animating, inspiring idea. The rest was ascribed to incidents of an unforeseen, insuperable nature—to deficiencies which brought their correctives along with themselves. The enemy, too, was taught to dread American enterprise—to esteem American courage. The thanks of Congress, reverberated by the whole country, rewarded both the General and the army.

In killed and wounded, the loss of the contending Chiefs was nearly equal, amounting, on each side, to about six hundred. Among her illustrious slain, America counted Brigadier General Nash of North-Carolina, and Captain Smith of the sixth Virginia regiment, acting as Adjutant General.—When it was unluckily determined to reduce the house occupied by Musgrave, a flag of truce was ordered onward, to summon the British Colonel. Of this flag Smith solicited the honourable, but perilous charge. He advanced, waving the sacred symbol, at sight of which all hostilities cease. The enemy respected it not. Its intrepid bearer fell under a murderous fire from the desperate foe.—On the part of the British, Brigadier General Agnew and Colonel Bird were among the victims of this bloody conflict.

The 9th Virginia regiment and part of the 6th, were made prisoners. Led on by their gallant commanders, Matthews and Towles, they had penetrated into the midst of the hostile army. Owing to the fatal circumstances already mentioned, they remained unsupported, and were ultimately compelled to surrender.—Washington, reinforced by some militia, and a State-regiment from Virginia, resumed his late station on the Skippack, and Howe, soon after, concentrated his forces in Philadelphia.

Again the whole attention of the two Generals was now turned to the obstructions in the Delaware—the one intent on maintaining, the other on removing them.—An attack by land and by water was concerted against Forts Mercer and Mifflin.—Against the former, Count Donop, a brave Hessian officer, marched with a strong detachment. Colonel Greene, of Rhode Island, had lately been entrusted with its defence. The force under his command, was inadequate to the extent of the works. He had, therefore, run a ditch and parapet across the rear of the Fort, with a view to contract the sphere of action, in case of an attack. At the very time that Donop was detached against Redbank, Lieutenant Colonel Simms, of the 6th Virginia regiment, happened to be on his march to Fort Mifflin, with a reinforcement. On his route, he was apprized of Donop's object. Reaching Fort Mercer the evening before the intended attack, he entreated a participation in the approaching struggle. Greene at first accepted his offer; reflection convinced him of the propriety

Attack on  
Fort Mercer.

October 22.



CHAP.  
XI.

1777

of strictly obeying the mandates of the Commander in Chief. The next morning, Simms was, therefore, conveyed to Mud-Island, where his aid might prove of still higher importance. Donop had now arrived, and vainly demanded a surrender. The movement of Simms and his corps led him to imagine that the garrison was attempting to escape. Inflamed by this idea, he immediately rushed to the assault. Of the outer ditch and parapet, he soon became possessed; they had been designedly abandoned. This increased the temerity of the assailants, who now advanced with tumult and fury against the inner line of defence. This was the propitious moment for Greene and his undaunted comrades. They seized it, and poured upon the rash foe a well kept up and most destructive fire. Dreadful was the carnage. Donop received a mortal wound. Mingerode, the second in command, experienced a similar fate; and to a precipitate retreat, and the protecting darkness of the ensuing night, the few survivors were indebted for their exemption from subsequent injury. The simultaneous and co-operating exertions of various British corps from the Pennsylvania side, and the naval diversion intended to complete the anticipated effect of what had been proudly planned as an overwhelming attack, equally failed. Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, who commanded in Fort Mifflin, and Commodore Hazlewood, who directed the moveable force of the Americans in the river, made a resistance no less successful than vigorous. The elements seemed to favour them. A strong Northerly wind checked the ascent of some British ships of the line. Among those that approached the Forts, two were grounded—the Augusta and the Merlin. Both were burnt—the first accidentally—the second purposely. A result which afforded the Americans ample solace for the capture of their frigate, the Delaware, by the party under Cornwallis, soon after his occupation of Philadelphia.

and on Fort  
Mifflin,Unsuccess-  
ful.

This brilliant repulse of so formidable a combination, stimulated the Americans to persevering and desperate efforts, for the maintenance of the river obstructions. In the mean time, the activity of the enemy was proportionately increased. His incessant cannonades from the heights above the mouth of the Schuylkill, from the ships below, and especially from Province-Island, almost adjacent to the scite on which Fort Mifflin stood, were felt with ominous severity. The gallant Smith, compelled by multiplied wounds to retire from his perilous, but honourable station, resigned the command to his second, Lieutenant-Colonel Simms, who displayed a courage and skill not unworthy of his predecessor, until the rotation of duty brought Col. Russel, of Massachusetts, to relieve him. Russell had courted this post—but his frame, exhausted with fatigue, ill seconded the ardour of his aspiring mind. Major Thayer

Nov. 11.



CHAP.  
XI.

1777

Fort Mifflin  
evacuated,

Nov. 15,

Also Fort  
Mercer.Delays in  
reinforcing  
Washington

of the Rhode-Island line, became his successor.—Could intrepidity, perseverance and skill have saved Fort Mifflin, it would have been preserved by Thayer, and his Spartan band—but a circumstance unexpectedly occurred, which baffled every power of defence.—Between Province and Mud-Islands, a narrow channel, either newly formed by the late high tides, or unobserved before, was discovered by the enemy—through that channel, an East-Indiaman, cut down for the purpose, and a hulk with three twenty-four pounders, successfully made their way to a station, near the Fort. Hazlewood vainly attempted to repel these new assailants.—The increased effect of the enemy's cannon now became irresistible. The American defences were soon levelled with the ground; and, in the night after this unexpected attack, the brave Thayer reluctantly abandoned a post which he had so truly defended to the last extremity.

Lord Cornwallis, joined at Chester by a considerable reinforcement from New-York, now advanced against the fortifications at Red-Bank. Washington detached Major-General Greene to fall on his rear; whilst investing Fort Mercer, the situation of which between two large creeks, encouraged the measure. Unfortunately, before Greene crossed the Delaware, Cornwallis approached the Fort, and rendered its evacuation unavoidable. Part of the American naval force escaped up the river; the rest was purposely consigned to the flames. Thus did Howe obtain the entire command of the Delaware, and secured to the British arms the possession of Philadelphia. By the delays of Glover's brigade, hourly expected from the North, and by a prudent regard to the real interests of his country, which dictated a careful preservation of military strength for higher objects, Greene was prevented from hazarding an engagement with Cornwallis; only he indulged the adventurous spirit of the chivalric La Fayette, in an attack upon one of the enemy's pickets, supporting him with a detachment from Morgan's corps of riflemen, under Col. Butler. La Fayette still served as a volunteer, and had not yet recovered from his wound. On this occasion, he was placed at the head of a small body of militia; the blow was successful. Thirty of the enemy fell, and the rest precipitately retired into their camp. Greene then re-crossed the Delaware, and joined the grand army.

Washington had some time before removed from his position on the Skippack to White-Marsh, a situation within fifteen miles of Philadelphia, and more favourable to his objects, which were to aid and invigorate the defence of the Forts on the Delaware, to cut off the supplies drawn by the enemy from the circumjacent country, and to seize on any opportunity that might be presented for striking him with advantage. With a view to these important ob-

jects, Washington urged reinforcements from various quarters, but especially from the North. As soon as the superiority of Gates over the enemy, was ascertained on the banks of the Hudson, the Commander in Chief pressed the return of Morgan's rifle corps, leaving, however, that measure to the decision of Gates himself. Morgan was then retained. Upon intelligence of the glorious event at Saratoga, Col. Hamilton repaired to the Northern army, to demand and expedite auxiliary detachments. He found part of that army under Putnam, who, at first, readily assented to the necessity of reinforcing Washington, though afterwards a scheme for an attack upon New York, and the manifestation of a mutinous spirit among the troops, occasioned fatal delays. The same assent could not easily be obtained from General Gates, now stationed at Albany with four brigades. He alledged an expedition meditated against Ticonderoga, yet held by the British, and the expediency of a strong protection for the arsenal, and the valuable stores at Albany. Glover's brigade, and other corps were, however, finally ordered to march to the banks of the Delaware; but these reinforcements did not reach their destination with sufficient celerity to aid in effecting the important objects in view.

On this occasion, there was in the conduct of Gates a mysterious dilatoriness, which, together with his omitting to report to General Washington, as Commander in Chief, the brilliant successes of the Northern army, wore an unfavourable aspect.

Had Washington been enabled by the contemplated reinforcements, to occupy the Western heights of the Schuylkill, without endangering his stores and hospitals, not only efficient protection might have been extended to Fort Mifflin, and the junction of the British fleet and army successfully opposed, but it is probable that Sir William would have been forced to a decisive contest, on ground disadvantageous to himself. Inferiority of numbers produced the results already stated; and when the expected accession at length joined the American General, the enemy was so strongly intrenched in Philadelphia, that an assault on that city, though vehemently urged by the ignorant, the rash, and, perhaps, the disaffected, was pronounced by Washington and all the well informed, a mad, hopeless, ruinous scheme.\* A cloud of obloquy for a moment obscured his fame; the refulgence of his splendid services soon dispelled the thin, fantastic vapour. His steady and discerning eye well saw that a numerous enemy, enclosed within the narrow precincts of a Town, would soon, in order to obtain the command of the surrounding country,

---

\* "Non ponebat enim rumores ante Salutem."—*Ennius*.



CHAP.  
XL

1777

be compelled to risk a battle, the result of which might be anticipated with delight by America—and should the foe avoid a battle, such a confession of inferiority would itself be worth a victory—his resources, too, must rapidly be wasted in the inglorious inactivity of his boasted conquest.

Howe foresaw the inevitable, though distant dangers of his cantonment, should Washington continue so near Philadelphia. Apparently resolved to attack the American army, he occupied Chesnut-Hill, on the 4th of December, and, for three days, continued manœuvring in view of Washington's encampment—threatening first his right—then his left—and after repeated demonstrations of assault, which terminated in a sharp skirmish, returned to Philadelphia, with the tacit acknowledgment that, on equal terms, and on ground chosen by his adversary, the veterans of Britain thought it unsafe to measure swords with the raw, but dauntless soldiers of liberty.

Washington  
retires into  
winter quar-  
ters.

Dec. 17.

The rigour of the season now forcibly suggested the expediency of retiring into winter-quarters. Unwilling to weaken his force by dispersion, and to expose the neighbouring country to the ravages of the foe, Washington selected for that purpose a salubrious scite, known by the appellation of Valley Forge, on the Western side of the Schuylkill. There a Town of huts was erected by his direction, and the whole strongly fortified. In the general orders which he issued on the subject, the Commander in Chief thanked his men for their past fortitude and patience—congratulated them on the substantial, though not splendid advantages of the campaign—opened to them a bright prospect in the increasing vigour and experience of America, and in the anticipated aid of France—exhorted them to a firm and manly perseverance—and after stating his plan for a winter position, concluded by observing that “he would himself share their hardships, and partake of every inconvenience.”—Those hardships were great, and we will soon advert to their causes.—Let us now fix our eyes on Virginia.

Meeting of  
the General  
Assembly.

Oct. 20.

The 20th of October had been appointed for the meeting of the General Assembly. Such, however, were the delays of most Members, that the House of Delegates could proceed to business only on the 30th of that month; and the Senate not before the 5th of November.

Again, we are struck, as we look over the Journals of this Session with the parental care bestowed by the Assembly on the numerous petitions of unfortunate citizens, who had felt the distresses of the war, in their varied shapes. This is a peculiarly interesting feature in the proceedings of Legislators who seem to have been in effect the fathers of the State.

Act for re-  
cruiting the

The eyes of those Legislators were soon directed to the grand army, and its wants. Death, captivity, and other



CHAP.  
XI.

1777

Virginia re-  
giments in  
Continental  
service.

casualties, had produced, in the troops furnished by Virginia, chasms which it was now necessary to fill up. A body of State regulars under Col. Gibson was, therefore, directed to continue in the Continental service. An extra bounty of twenty dollars was offered to those men who, after the expiration of their present term of service, should re-enlist, either for three years or during the war. It was directed that the men lately raised on Commonwealth establishment should be speedily organized, and join General Washington.

Draughts from among the unmarried members of the militia, in every section of the State, were, moreover, ordered. For this purpose, lots were to be drawn, and one out of every twenty-five men must become a soldier, and serve one year. A bounty of fifteen dollars was, independently of Continental encouragements, to be paid by the State to each man thus draughted. The usual tenderness towards the connections of poor soldiers who might be disabled or slain in the service of their country, was manifested by a suitable provision. From this draught Quakers and Menonists were exempted, on condition that their respective societies should furnish a proportionate number of proper substitutes.—Desertion had increased to a fatal degree: to lessen its evils, it was enacted that every person aiding or concealing a deserter should, if a man, take his place, and, if a woman, pay a heavy fine. The Legislators, however, respecting, in certain cases, the inherent sensibilities of the human heart, excluded from these penalties the wife secreting her husband, the widow her son, and the child his or her parent. Counties, corporations, or individuals, apprehending one or more deserters, were proportionately released from military obligations. The same act encouraged the formation of volunteer corps to serve for six months, from the time of their reaching the place of general rendezvous. To remove all objections to military service, the members of particular religious societies, especially Baptists and Methodists, were invited to organize themselves into separate companies under officers of their own principles. The measures contemplated by this act were to be effected before the ensuing Spring.

To provide for the Military, adequate supplies of clothing and provisions, was the next object of Legislative care. Avarice and extortion, speculating on public wants, as well as on private distress, had hitherto opposed immense difficulties to the usual methods of procuring such supplies. Extraordinary measures were, therefore, resorted to. The Governor and Council were authorized to appoint, in every part of the Commonwealth, Commissioners for the purpose of seizing all articles of clothing proper for the use of the army, wherever such articles should be found in the possession of persons having purchased them for sale. Against

Act for  
speedily  
clothing the  
army.

CHAP.  
XI.

1777

For procur-  
ing provi-  
sions.Act for  
raising mo-  
ney.

the concealment of such articles, energetic provision was made: workmen might be impressed to convert the whole into wearing apparel; the value of the materials, and the wages of the workmen impressed, were to be determined by four reputable citizens, upon oath, and immediately paid for.\* To procure provisions, another act was passed prohibiting for a limited time the exportation of beef, pork, and bacon, by land or water, except to the Continental army, or to any troops sent out of the Commonwealth. The monopoly of such articles, and, indeed, of all provisions, including salt, was prevented by authorizing the seizure, at a moderate price, of any quantity exceeding the wants of the possessor and his family. Forestalling, regrating, and other practices tending to increase the complicated embarrassments of the times, were also rigorously prohibited.

The generality of the people had now become sensible that, the quantity of paper-money in circulation greatly exceeding the medium of commerce, depreciation must be the inevitable consequence, even if artificial causes should not concur in the production of that effect: they clearly saw that the value of that money could be maintained only by its gradual, but certain redemption; they knew, too, that funds were wanted not only for carrying on the war, but for the repayment of the money borrowed by the Continental Congress, and by the State, or, at least, for discharging the annual interest of the sums thus borrowed. By these considerations they had been reconciled to the idea of an attempt towards a system of taxation commensurate with those different objects. The expediency of taxation was pressed by the inhabitants of some Counties on their Delegates in the General Assembly.† It was, therefore, enacted that, for seven years, a tax of ten shillings for every hundred pounds value, should be levied on real and personal property. Debts bearing interest, annuities, including the rents payable to the Proprietor of the Northern-Neck, licenses, and many other objects, were subjected to the operation of this act, in which the people cheerfully acquiesced, under the impressions already stated.

Among the financial regulations adopted by the General Assembly during the present session, we remark an act for laying a public levy, and another act to prevent private persons from issuing bills of credit in the nature of paper-currency, a practice, that tended to the deception

---

\* It had been intended to keep this act secret until put in execution, but it became known through the printer's workmen. See Journal of the House of Delegates for this Session, page 87.

† See Purdie's Gazette, September 26, 1777, and the Journal of the House of Delegates.—*Passim*.

and loss of individuals, and to the injury of the public. by swelling a stream which already overflowed the field of commerce. The salaries of certain officers of Government, and of the Delegates to the General Congress, whose number was now increased to seven, were also regulated by law.\*

CHAP.  
XI.

1777

Act sequestering British property.

Many persons residing in various parts of the British Empire, some of whom had been born, and others settled in America, but had left it since the commencement of the troubles, were proprietors of estates, real and personal in Virginia. Several of them had become entitled to considerable debts, and, in certain cases, suits had been instituted for the recovery of such debts, before the general administration of justice was suspended. All such persons had now become alien enemies: their estates, of course, were legally forfeited, and their debts irrecoverable. Yet, those estates had been acquired, those debts incurred, under the auspices of laws and relations then held sacred; nor had the British Government provoked confiscation by the example of it, in parallel cases. The proceeds of such estates, however, and the interest or principal of such debts might increase the warlike resources of the enemy. These were considerations of moment. In them, an act originated sequestering the estates and other property of British subjects into the hands of Commissioners to be appointed from time to time by the Governor and Council. The clear profits of each particular estate were to be paid into the treasury. All persons owing debts to British subjects might also pay them to the treasurer of the Commonwealth. The monies thus brought in were declared to remain the property of British subjects; and if the wives and children of any such proprietors or creditors had been left in the State, suitable allowances were made by the Governor and Council for their support, out of the same monies. If used on account of the Commonwealth, the sums thus received were to be repaid, unless the subsequent conduct of Great Britain should justify retaliatory detention. With respect to debts in suit, a middle course was adopted, neither cancelling the fair claims of British subjects, nor bearing with too much severity on American citizens.

\* As the progressive increase of such salaries may give some idea of the effects of depreciation, we shall occasionally mention them. The present allowances were—

To the Delegates in Congress, 10 Dolls. per day, 1 Doll. per mile.  
Governor, 1500 £ per annum.  
Counsellors of State, 2400 £ per annum, to be divided, &c.  
Treasurer, - - - 1200 £ per annum.  
Attorney-General, 300 £ per annum.  
Aud. of P. Accounts, 400 £ each, per annum. The salary allowed the Judges in Chancery was 300 £ per annum, each.



CHAP.  
XI.

1777

Courts of  
Justice o-  
pened again.

High Court  
of Chancery  
and General  
Court estab-  
lished.

The troubles which had convulsed the whole country, and the distresses incident to a state of war, had induced the General Convention to suspend the proceedings of the Courts of Justice in certain cases. This measure, then the offspring of the most imperious exigencies, had gradually become injurious to commerce, industry, and public morals. The streams of justice now were made to flow again in their former channels. A High Court of Chancery, and a General Court were, moreover, established. These tribunals were to receive appeals from the County Courts; and to have original jurisdiction where the subject of controversy was of the value of ten pounds sterling, or where it concerned the title or bounds of land. To the General Court, was also attributed the power to hear and determine all treasons, murders, felonies, and other minor crimes. Of the Court of Chancery, Edmund Pendleton, George Wythe, and R. C. Nicholas were appointed Judges; for the General Court, Joseph Jones, John Blair, Thomas Ludwell Lee, Thomson Mason, and Paul Carrington, received a similar appointment.

Several other acts were passed, in the nature and bearings of which history is little interested. This Session, however, presents circumstances worthy of remark, in addition to those already related.

Articles of  
Confederation  
approved by Vir-  
ginia.

The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union proposed by Congress, on the 17th of November, 1776,\* were approved and ratified by the following resolutions:

December  
15.

“*Resolved, nemine contradicente*, That a speedy ratification of the Articles of Confederation between the United States of America, will confound the devices of their foreign, and frustrate the machinations of their domestic enemies, encourage their firm friends, and fix the wavering, contribute much to the support of their public credit and the restoration of the value of their paper-money, produce unanimity in their Councils at home, and add weight to their negotiations abroad, and, completing the independence of their country, establish the best foundation for its prosperity.”

“*Resolved, nemine contradicente*, That the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, proposed by Congress on the 17th of November, 1776, between the States of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North-Carolina, South-Carolina, and Georgia, and referred for approbation to the consideration of the several Legislatures of the said States, ought to be approved and ratified on the part of this Commonwealth; and that our

\* See Appendix, No. 1.

Delegates in Congress be accordingly authorized, and instructed to ratify the same in the name and on the behalf of this Commonwealth, and that they attend for that purpose on or before the 10th day of March next."

CHAP.  
XI.

1777

In the country about Fort Pitt, alarming symptoms of disaffection had manifested themselves, and nefarious schemes of combined savage and internal hostility were known to have been formed. Commissioners had been named by Congress to repair there, and investigate the rise, progress, and extent of the dark liberticide plots, hatched in that quarter. The Legislature of Virginia authorized those Commissioners to apprehend such inhabitants of the Counties of Ohio, Monongalia, and Yohogania as should appear to them to have been concerned in any conspiracy against the Union, and to surrender them to the just vengeance of the laws.

Other Legislative measures.

The arm of the Executive was nerved by the grant of additional extraordinary powers to the Governor and Council; the vexatious suits instituted against them by the suspected individuals who, during the late alarm, had been removed or confined, were stopped by Legislative authority; and the thanks of the House were unanimously given to General Nelson, whose patriotic and disinterested exertions, upon the appearance of the enemy's fleet, we have already noticed.

Military preparation was, at this time, deemed so vitally important that the employment of a foreign corps by the Commonwealth appeared to the Legislature a desirable step. The Governor was empowered to stipulate with one Bory, the projector of this scheme, for the importation of foreign troops, whose numbers and duties were defined by the Legislature, and whose pay was to be drawn from the Treasury of Virginia.

In the mean time, great attention was bestowed on whatever could promote in the state, a knowledge of the art of war. A school of instruction in artillery and fortification, under the direction of Monsieur Loyaute, was liberally encouraged. A French independent company, headed by that valuable officer, had been taken into the pay of the Commonwealth. Loyaute was, moreover, appointed Inspector-General of artillery, fortifications, and military stores. An obvious policy suggested the measure of associating with him, in the multiplied labours of this department, a citizen of the State, of a studious, active, and intelligent disposition, with the title of Adjutant-General, and the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. In the school of artillery, one hundred men were to be instructed at a time, in rotation, so as to communicate the desired knowledge to the whole regiment, of which Thomas Marshall was appointed Colonel, George Muter, Lieutenant-Colonel, and Thomas Mathews, Major, to the great satisfac-

CHAP.  
XI.

tion of the men. All the parts of the State susceptible of attack and defence were to be pointed out by the Inspector General, and batteries and other works erected, with magazines in their vicinity.

1777

Against the Western enemies of the State, an expedition was, at this time contemplated; its important result will be noticed in the sequel. We have only to remark at present that the Legislature placed at the disposal of the Executive a portion of the militia, intended to co-operate with the regular force destined for that enterprize, planned by Colonel George R. Clarke, and confided to his adventurous spirit. At the same time, measures were adopted to afford security to the trade of the Chesapeake Bay, and in those measures Maryland was invited to join. With North-Carolina a plan for maritime defence was also concerted. A Captain Yerby, of Lancaster county had, upon conditions injurious to the justice and honour of the Commonwealth, treacherously delivered to two of the enemy's ships of war a French vessel, peaceably trading in the ports of Virginia, in full reliance on that protection which every independent country extends to neutral commerce. The vengeance of the offended laws was called on his head, and the consequences of individual perfidiousness thus prevented from affecting the national interest, by exciting distrust and resentment abroad.

Among the numerous appointments which took place during this session, we remark that of John Banister, and Thomas Adams to the General Congress; and of James Madison to the Council of State. Mr. Madison had rapidly ascended on the political horizon of his country, and the early effulgence of his virtues and talents, promised to her constellation of sages, another luminary of transcendent brightness.

Resolutions  
relative to  
the Western  
unappropri-  
ated lands.

Vast tracts of unappropriated lands on the Western waters of the State, opened, in the present posture of affairs, an incalculable resource. A scheme was accordingly formed to dispose of those lands, for the purpose of creating a sinking fund, in aid of the taxes, for discharging the public debt. All entries for such lands were now suspended by Legislative authority. A loan office was designed, in which waste and unappropriated lands should be sold, on moderate terms, for the benefit of the State. No family was allowed to purchase more than four hundred acres. As to the claims of certain individuals to unpatented lands in the Western section of Virginia, they were subjected to future discussion and adjustment. The resolutions relative to these different points,\* closed the labours of this Session of the General Assembly, on the 24th of January, 1778.

\* See Appendix, No. 2.



## CHAPTER XII.

---

*Cantonment at Valley-Forge—Sufferings of the troops there—Causes of those sufferings—Happily removed—Plan for supplanting Washington—Defeated—Usefulness of Baron Steuben—Attack on Captain H. Lee—His escape—And promotion—Nelson raises a volunteer corps of cavalry in Virginia—Other military events—Unsuccessful attempt for a general exchange of prisoners—Alarm in England—Ministerial efforts—Conciliatory plan—Its causes—French rescript—How received—Appointments of Commissioners to America—Earl of Chatham opposes American Independence—Dies—Rough draughts of the conciliatory bills reach America—Are published—Their contents—Proceedings of Congress upon them—Pardon offered by Congress to Loyalists—French treaties arrive—Magnanimity of Louis XVI—Conciliatory bills arrive in due form—Arrival of the Commissioners themselves—They address Congress—Second letter of the Commissioners to Congress—Not answered—The Commissioners address each State—Threaten extermination—Declaration of Congress thereupon—Virginia refuses to receive the manifesto of the Commissioners—The Commissioners effect nothing.*

THE novel mode of cantonment adopted by Washington did not originate in stern indifference to the sufferings which it might produce, or in the affectation of singularity; it resulted from sound military and patriotic views, which soon developed themselves, and gave to the present winter unusual activity. All intercourse with the enemy and Philadelphia was, as far as practicable occluded. Since the occupation of that city by the British, Washington had endeavoured to cut off those supplies with which cupidity or disaffection was ever ready to assist them. In effecting this, the enterprizing Potter, heading a large body of militia, and Captain Henry Lee of the Virginia cavalry, had rendered essential service. The terrors of martial law would have remained unavailing, if not thus supported. Young, ardent, indefatigable, Lee peculiarly distinguished himself in this bold, excursive partizan warfare. To him, and to the hardy Morgan, the Western margin of the Schuylkill was now entrusted; of the Eastern bank, Major Jameson, with two troops of horse, assumed the protection. Smallwood was stationed at Wil-

CHAP.  
XII.

---

1778

Cantonment  
at Valley-  
Forge.

CHAP.  
XII.

1778

Sufferings  
of the troops  
there,

mington to guard that part of the Delaware, and Armstrong took part at White Marsh, for a correspondent purpose. The valorous Pulaski, who, by contributing to the establishment of liberty in America, sought solace for the lost independence of his own country, repaired to Trenton, there to augment and instruct, during the winter-months, the cavalry, to the command of which he had been appointed.

The hardships which Washington had anticipated, and announced to his troops, were soon felt in a degree which transcends description, whilst the fortitude with which they were endured excites admiration, respect, gratitude. The retrospect of such sufferings and of such equanimity, must enhance for ever the value of those inestimable blessings which they contributed to purchase, and which numberless generations may successively enjoy, if they have but wisdom and virtue enough to preserve them. If ever lurking principles of corruption and degeneracy should enfeeble, in the breasts of Americans, that strong attachment which they now manifest for liberty, and endanger the free institutions of the country, we call upon them to look back, not so much to that holy enthusiasm which armed, at the beginning of the contest, every class of citizens against the inroads of tyranny, not so much to their heroic courage in the hour of battle, as to the noble, manly, incredible perseverance which they displayed under the complicated distresses of nakedness, hunger, and disease! To throw away a prize obtained by such men, and at such expence, would be worse than infamy! But the foul deed is impossible.

Those distresses arose not merely from the inclemency of the season. They chiefly originated in want of clothes and provisions, and in the defects of the medical department.

Causes of those sufferings  
In great revolutions, individuals, and even bodies of men are often betrayed by excessive zeal into fatal errors. From pure, but mistaken views, the General Congress, blending executive functions with Legislative powers, had framed a system of administration, the machinery of which was so extensive and so complex, as to relax its springs, and embarrass and slacken its movements. The duties commonly included in the office of Commissary General, and delegated to subordinate agents accountable to the head of that department, had injudiciously been divided into several district provinces, entrusted to the management of persons appointed by Congress, independent on each other, but acting under the immediate controul of that supreme Body. The consequences of this injurious plan were soon felt by the army. Redress being thus placed at too great a distance from the sufferers, and its means retarded, instead of accelerated, neglect and abuses became almost intolerable. To this

CHAP.  
XII.

1778

were added the ill effects of depreciation, and of the almost total annihilation of foreign commerce. The immense deficiency in the supplies required, could not be filled up by the prizes of American privateers, numerous as they were, by the occasional adventures from France, and other friendly European countries, or by the seizures of goods authorized by law, in the different States; and not unfrequently, while the army thus laboured under accumulated distresses, large quantities of clothes and provisions lay upon the road and in the woods, where they perished for want of prompt and adequate transportation. In February 1778, no fewer than 3989 men were returned incapable for action from almost absolute nakedness! The hospitals were an aspect scarcely less deplorable. They were little better than receptacles of protracted anguish, almost generally terminating in death. The sick were left, in most cases, without those attentions which their situation claimed—without proper remedies—without even that cheap and light food which their morbid appetites craved—whilst, O shame indelible! Some of the persons concerned in the direction of the hospitals, appropriated to their own use, or dishonestly sold, the wine, sugar and other articles destined for the poor, debilitated, suffering soldier.

Washington saw these abuses, and indignantly frowned upon them. The Congress listened to the impressive appeal, which he made to their feelings, to their wisdom, to their justice, in behalf of his beloved troops. The evil was probed to the quick, and the remedy promptly and efficiently applied; but had the hold of Washington on the affection of his men been less potent, had he not exercised for the salvation of his country, that ascendancy which his virtues, his zeal, and his abilities gave him, or had he been less energetic in calling upon Congress to extirpate the canker which thus preyed on the vitals of the army, it is impossible to determine how fatal the result might have been. Equally fortunate, perhaps, for the liberties of America was the unaccountable supineness of Sir William, who, apparently immersed in the luxuries of another Capua, made no effort to improve to his own advantage the distresses of his opponent! Hostile enterprize was particularly apprehended, whilst the different divisions of the army were subjected to inoculation.

The attachment of the troops to Washington, their esteem for his transcendent worth, which had so happily contributed to silence every murmur in the midst of multiplied sufferings, now devolved a powerful combination, aiming at no less than his removal from the supreme command of the army. The Legislature of Pennsylvania warmly resented his having refused to adopt offensive measures for the recovery of their Metropolis. Several members of

Happily removed.

Plan for supplanting Washington



CHAP.  
XII.

1778

Congress disapproved his avowed preference of fair purchase to military compulsion, even for the most imperious exigencies. His prudence and his lenity were alike misrepresented. A party was formed to hurl him from the summit of military power, and to give to General Gates the chief command of the American armies. Scarcely any Congressional Delegates, South of the Hudson, shared in the design. How far Gates himself was concerned in it, cannot be satisfactorily ascertained. His dilatory order for the reinforcements urged by Washington—his affected, we had almost said, contemptuous silence, after the catastrophe at Saratoga, and, above all, his correspondence with the factionist Conway, betrayed an ambitious hope, if not an ungenerous intention. On this occasion, the conduct of Washington was calm, deliberate, dignified. It was not for himself, but for his country, that he had assumed, and wished to retain, the direction of the American forces. His patriotism, his virtue, had often been tried; and his abilities were not inferior to those of his hitherto more successful rival. In him, too, the troops viewed not only the skillful and gallant leader, but the native of that beloved country in whose defence they were now armed, the faithful and inflexible supporter of American rights, the friend, the parent of the army, ever attentive to their health and comfort, ever sparing of their blood, ever ready to participate in their hardships and dangers. Faction was awed; no change took place; and Washington's usefulness and popularity continued to increase.\* Gates was placed at the head of the new board of war, a post of trust and dignity scarcely inferior to that of the Commander in Chief. His services in that station have been justly applauded.

Usefulness of  
Baron Steu-  
ben.

The arrival of Baron Steuben, a Prussian officer, who had served with distinction in the armies of the renowned Frederick, was another auspicious circumstance. Deeply skilled in those manœuvres introduced by that warlike monarch; and the principal cause of the superiority which his troops so wonderfully displayed in battle, the Baron, with unremitting zeal, trained the American army to quickness, precision, and regularity of tactics; and so strongly and so universally felt were his substantial services, that his almost immediate promotion to a high rank,† excited no jealousy, even among the most punctilious.

\* Botta erroneously assigns, among the causes which preserved the chief command of the army in the hands of Washington, a fear of indisposing France, by the appointment of Gates, a native of England.—We have good authority to assert that the idea never entered the head of any member of Congress. The plan of displacing Washington chiefly originated in local and individual jealousies, and was indignantly scouted.

† Steuben was appointed Inspector General of the army, with the rank of Major General, in the room of the intriguing and querulous Conway.

Thus was the winter usefully employed in regenerating the army. In the spring it issued from Valley Forge with renovated moral and physical energies—every department of it improved—meritorious officers retained in the service by commensurate pay—the unworthy no longer suffered to disgrace professional rank—supplies seldom failing—the recruits, in proportion as they arrived from the different states, incorporated and assimilated with promptitude and success—in short, order, regularity, discipline and strength were zealously infused into that immense body, on whose exertions America depended for relief and safety.

In this narrative, of which Virginia is the particular subject, we naturally dwell with complacency on whatever is connected with the bravery and enterprize of her sons.—The vigilance and exertions of Capt. Henry Lee and his bold comrades, had proved too fatal to the enemy not to stimulate ideas of revenge. A plan to surprise both him and his troops, in their quarters, was accordingly arranged. By a circuitous nocturnal march, a numerous corps of hostile cavalry reached, about break of day, the station occupied by Lee—seized, without communicating the alarm, on four of his patrols—wounded and secured his Quarter Master Serjeant, whom they met near the house, which they now surrounded and attacked—only ten men, including Lee and Major Jameson, who accidentally happened to be present, were in the assailed edifice—a number scarcely sufficient to furnish a man to each window—with so much gallantry and skill, however, did this small band within, repel the assault, that the enemy retired with loss and disgrace. They had a Serjeant and three men, with several horses killed; and an officer and three men wounded. Lee, besides the capture of his four patrols and Quarter-Master Serjeant, had one man killed; the brave Lieutenant Lindsay and one private, were wounded. Washington, whose delight it uniformly was to weave the laurel wreath round the brow of merit, bestowed, in the most flattering terms, his thanks and applause on Captain Lee and his gallant comrades. To reward his zealous services during the whole of the campaign, as well as his courage on this occasion, Congress promoted Lee to the rank of Major, giving him at the same time, the command of an independent partizan corps, to consist of three troops of cavalry.

The importance of this species of force had induced Congress to recommend to the American States raising volunteer corps of light cavalry, to act with the grand army,

CHAP.  
XII.

1778

March 28.

Attack on  
Capt. H.  
Lee.

His escape

And promotion.

Nelson raises a volunteer corps of

whose faults, however, were expiated by a noble instance of candour, before he quitted America. See Marshall, *UBI SUPRA*.

CHAP.  
XII.

1778

cavalry in  
Virginia.  
April 12.

during the next campaign. The appeal was not lost on the gallant Nelson, whom we have seen heading the forces of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the preceding summer, when the appearance of the British fleet in the Chesapeake created fears of an invasion. He immediately engaged in forming a regiment of horse, composed of such lovers of their country and its cause as should voluntarily enlist in its service. "I address myself,\* he said, to the true sons of liberty. Of such, and such only, this corps must be composed. There are many Gentlemen in this State whose fortunes will enable them to equip themselves. They should step forth, and set the example. I wish not, however, to confine volunteers to this class. We have among us noble spirited young men, whose patriotic zeal would prompt them to join us, did not their inability in point of fortune prevent them. Pity that they should be deprived of the opportunity of distinguishing themselves! To enable such, therefore, to enter into this service, I propose that such should be furnished with a horse and accoutrements by subscription in their respective counties; and surely those who remain at home, enjoying all the blessings of domestic life, will not hesitate to contribute liberally for such a purpose.—On the 25th day of May, I expect to meet at Fredericksburg such of you as wish to distinguish yourselves in this contest."—Nelson was universally esteemed and beloved: his voice, his example re-animated that glorious spirit, which, after the struggle of 1775 and 1776, seemed to have lapsed into a momentary slumber. Several young men of fortune joined his banners. The Gazettes of that day† mention, with just praise, the General's two brothers, Hugh and Robert Nelson, and Lewis Burwell of Gloucester, who, after setting on foot in his county, a subscription, to which he himself largely contributed, to equip young men for that service, turned out likewise as a volunteer. Public liberality aided individual efforts: the contemplated corps was soon formed and equipped.—It was on its march to join the grand army, when the removal of the enemy from the State of Pennsylvania rendered its immediate employment unnecessary. Congress, however, did not see without pleasure and gratitude this new manifestation of patriotic fervor from Virginia. Nelson and his generous comrades received the unanimous thanks of the supreme National Council. But let us not break the chain of events.

Other military events.

A second expedition planned against Canada, and to be conducted by the adventurous and gallant La Fayette, was

---

\* See Dixon and Hunter's Virginia Gazette—April 17, 1778.

† Purdie's Virginia Gazette—May 1, 1778.



necessarily, though reluctantly abandoned, the situation of the country, and the objects of the next campaign, required a concentration of resources, incompatible with schemes of conquest.

The vigilance exercised by General Washington to restrain the enemy within a narrow compass, and protect the circumjacent country, gave a keener edge to hostile stratagem and enterprize. The British made successful incursions into Jersey; Mawhood and Simcoe left, in that devoted State, traces of devastation and barbarity still remembered with abhorrence—in this petty war, La Fayette narrowly escaped surprize and utter defeat. To cover the country North of the Schuylkill, and intercept ravaging parties of the enemy, he had been detached over that river, with about two thousand choice troops, and taken post ten miles in front of the army at Valley Forge. His exposed situation did not escape the foe, and a plan to cut him off was immediately formed. Through the negligence of some militia, whom La Fayette had directed to guard his left flank, but who did not comply with the order, General Grant at the head of five thousand men, advanced, in the night along the Delaware, and, inclining to the left, stationed part of his corps in the rear of the Marquis, between him and Valley-Forge. At the same time, a strong detachment, under his guidance, took post at a ford, two or three miles in front of La Fayette's right flank, on the South side of the Schuylkill. The dawn of the following day disclosed to the youthful leader the extent of his danger—which was at the same time, announced to him by alarm guns from Valley-Forge. With a promptitude and decision, inspired by that masterly *coup d'œil* which distinguishes military genius, La Fayette instantly marched his troops to Matson's Ford, nearer to the British General than to himself, and without being intercepted recrossed the Schuylkill, and took possession of the high grounds on the other side, saving his artillery, and losing only nine men in this retreat, on which General Washington and Grant himself, bestowed a well deserved compliment.

In a war like the present, possessing so strong a tendency to infuriate the rancorous and vindictive passions of the human heart, that generosity which, among civilized nations, meliorates the condition of prisoners seemed to have been forgotten by Great-Britain. She persisted in treating the Americans, not as enemies, but as rebels. Her Generals and Admirals murdered them in cold blood, in their prisons and prison-ships, by suffocation, filth, hunger, and nakedness, refusing to them the food and rayment provided by public authority, or private affection and sympathy—with gold and nourishment tempting those virtuous citizens, in the agonies of misery and despair, to dip their

CHAP.  
XII.

1778.

hands in the blood of their countrymen—and, it was said, dooming them, in Africa and India, to the horrors of slavery. The representations of the American Commissioners in France, on this affecting subject, at first to Lord Stormont, and afterwards to the Ministers, had met with unfeeling repulse, and popular sensibility alone had relieved the sufferings of American prisoners in England. In New York, their distresses had been aggravated by the grossest insults, as already stated in the course of our narrative. General Lee himself had been treated as a State criminal of the first magnitude, until retaliation and the capture of Burgoyne, induced, in his favour, a relaxation from systematic and unjustifiable rigour; on the other hand, Congress “desirous, since they could not prevent, at least to alleviate the calamities of war, had (to use their own words) studied to spare those who were in arms against them, and to lighten the chains of captivity.”

Unsuccessful attempt for a general exchange of prisoners.

General Washington, who deeply sympathized with the distresses of his soldiers, especially, in situations so peculiarly affecting, endeavoured, at this time, to establish with Sir William a general cartel for a fair and satisfactory exchange of prisoners. His humane and liberal views did not meet with correspondent ideas and feelings. Mutual recrimination, and a frigid, ignoble policy defeated the benevolent scheme. Only a partial exchange could be agreed upon. It restored to America many valuable officers and soldiers. Major-General Lee shared in its benefits.

Alarm in England.

The surrender of Burgoyne, the slow, unprofitable conquests of General Howe, and his ultimate abandonment of the field before an American army, produced in England astonishment, discontent, humiliation, and despondency. The Ministers had poured on America the plenitude of their wrath. They had armed against her numerous and powerful fleets—ransacked England, Scotland and Ireland for men—hired petty German Princes to a disgraceful traffic of their subjects, in favour of the royal cause—nay, associated to that cause savage allies—they had left Great-Britain in such a defenceless state, that she might well tremble for her safety—they had almost ruined her trade, and expended millions of money—all this, and more, they had done to conquer America, and such was the result of three campaigns!—their armies reduced to a mere shadow of their original strength and splendour—one with all its baggage, artillery and stores, compelled to surrender to the victorious arms of Americans, the other, tacitly to confess its inferiority, and to retreat behind strong works for shelter. France, too, probably impelled to decisive measures by events so consonant to her wishes. These considerations presented to the people gloomy prospects of danger, distress, and ruin: to the Ministers, they presaged the ultimate prostration of their proud hopes, and favourable plans.

With bitter censure on the errors and infatuation of these Ministers, the Parliamentary session of 1777. closed on the 10th of December, the two Houses adjourning to the 20th of the next month. That censure was from the opposition. By a corrupt majority liberal pecuniary supplies were granted to the Crown for the service of the ensuing year.

CHAP.  
XII.

1778

Had no other causes precluded further purchases of men in Germany, the dispute which, about this time, broke out between the Emperor and the King of Prussia for the Bavarian succession, would alone have cut off that disgraceful resource. The Ministers and their friends were, therefore, compelled to pursue another plan. This was to levy new troops by a voluntary supply from the people. Manchester and Liverpool led the way, and immediately offered each a regiment of 1,000 men. Instead of joining the ministerial phalanx. London and Bristol vehemently remonstrated against the war. Wales furnished some independent companies; but from prejudice and interest, as well as from an inbred martial spirit, Scotland stood foremost in this liberticide levy. Edinburgh and Glasgow raised regiments of 1,000 men each; and the descendants of ancient and renowned Chieftains in the Highlands, embodied, at their own expence, considerable numbers of indigent and deluded retainers.\* Large subscriptions were likewise opened and filled, in several places, to support the authority of Great-Britain over her rebellious Colonies in America.

Ministerial  
efforts.

The returning Session of Parliament disclosed to the nation and to the world, the alarming state of British affairs in America.†

\* See Appendix, No. 3.

† The subjoined facts were stated by Mr. Fox in the House of Commons, and by the Duke of Richmond in the House of Lords:

The British army in North-America was in

1774	6,884 men	} 83 men of war and armed vessels. 22,337 their complement of men.
1775	11,219	
1776	45,865	
1777	48,616	

The losses, according to the last returns laid before the House were,  
 19,381 by death, desertion, or otherwise. } inland army.  
 5,336 prisoners. }  
 4,639 sick. }  
 4,314 lost of the navy.

36,731 remains of the army, in Philadelphia, New-York, Rhode-Island, and Canada.

Losses of merchants by capture of their vessels,	-	-	£ 2,670,000
Diminution of African trade annually,	-	-	1,400,000
Extra expences for the four last years, viz. war expences,	-	-	23,894,702
Further expences necessary to settle all matters, even if peace should be immediately concluded.	}		9,000,000



CHAP.  
XII.

1778

Conciliatory  
plan.

Then it was that Lord North, abandoning the original ground of dispute, began to speak of conciliation, and proposed to appoint Commissioners, to adjust all existing differences with the Congress, as a body lawfully assembled, and representing America; in short to yield every thing, except Independence. He developed his views in a long, able, and eloquent speech. By all he was heard with surprize, by some with mortification, by others with resentment. A sullen, gloomy silence ensued. Anxiety, fear, and discontent manifested themselves. The national strength and resources were yet adequate to a continuance of the struggle in America. Some awful blow was therefore, conjectured in some other quarter, and to this blow the dismayed friends of administration ascribed the relinquishment of measures hitherto pursued with pertinacity and even violence.

Its cause.

Feb. 17.

Mr. Fox explained the real cause of the present ministerial dependency. He informed the House that France had entered into friendly arrangements with the American States, and his information was not contradicted.

In effect, the preliminaries of two treaties, one of friendship and commerce, the other of eventual defensive alliance, had been delivered by the Chevalier Gerard, on the 16th of December, 1777, to the American Commissioners. They were concluded and signed at Paris on the 6th of February, 1778. The watchful jealousy of Lord Stormont, the British Ambassador, soon put him in possession of this last occurrence; and in little more than two days after it took place, it reached the British Cabinet.

The intelligence was alarming. It rallied round the English premier, in what was now deemed a prudent retreat, both the friends and the opponents of the administration. The conciliatory propositions of Lord North were hurried through both Houses of Parliament; and before they could be formally sanctioned, they were forwarded to America, in hopes of their preceding the intelligence of what had been done in France, and of thus preventing the ratification by Congress of the treaties alluded to. Illusory hopes! The hour of practicability and good humour had elapsed. Now it was that the prophetic admonitions of the eloquent Burke applied with peculiar force. "Conciliation failing, had said that penetrating Statesmen, in 1775, force remains; but force failing there is no farther hope of conciliation. Power and authority may, indeed, be bought by kindness, but they cannot be begged as alms, by an impoverished and de-seated violence."

French re-  
script.

It would have been inconsistent with the dignity of the French Monarch, to draw a veil of secrecy over the arrangements entered into with the United States; nor was it his intention to conceal transactions, founded in justice

to himself, and magnanimity towards the new Republic. Accordingly, he notified to the Cabinet of St. James, thro' the Marquis De Noailles, his Ambassador at London, the treaty of amity and commerce already mentioned, together with the eventual measures taken to enforce it, and gave to the American Commissioners a public and splendid audience.

Peace with France might still have been preserved. Indeed, the rescript delivered to the British Court by the diplomatic representative of Louis, though it announced a determination on his part to protect the rights of his subjects and the dignity of his flag, breathed a pacific temper. The pride of the English Monarch chose to consider the whole as an unprovoked insult on the honor of his Crown, as an ungenerous aggression on the essential interests of his Empire. No declaration of war was immediately made—but diplomatic intercourse ceased—and both nations prepared for hostilities with equal activity.

In the mean time, the conciliatory bills having passed through the requisite forms, were dispatched to America, with the Earl of Carlisle, William Eden, and George Johnstone, as Commissioners, to act with the Admiral, and the Commander in Chief, or, in case of the absence of the latter, with Sir Henry Clinton. Johnstone was known as an opponent of the measures against America; the other Commissioners were zealous, and even violent Ministerialists. They sailed for New-York, on the 22d of April.

An effort was made by some Members of the opposition to enlarge the ground, and secure the success of the negotiation, by relinquishing the desperate grasp of Great-Britain at sovereignty, and acknowledging the Independence of the American States. In this effort, the Earl of Chatham did not unite with his friends. British supremacy was his idol; and he could not be reconciled to a separation of interest which he emphatically styled “the setting of the British sun.” He seems to have thought that the terms now offered were sufficient to restore the primitive union and friendship. The motives of Congress for assuming Independence, he considered as wholly prudential—to obtain assistance abroad—and to prevent at home the dangers of half-doubting measures—anarchy—or military Cromwells. If the American leaders should once feel the ground sure and solid underneath their feet, they would, in his opinion, be induced to break the talisman—dissolve the charm—and burst the bladder that floated them through wide seas, in spite of Ministerial blasts and violence. And should America pertinaciously cling to her declared Independence, Great-Britain, he said, still possessed the means of supporting and enforcing her rights—and none but cowards and traitors would refuse to act in

## CHAP. XII.

1778

March 13,  
and 21.How re-  
ceived.Appoint-  
ment of  
Commission-  
ers to  
America.

April 7.

Earl of Chas-  
tham op-  
poses Ame-  
rican inde-  
pendence.

CHAP.  
XII.

1778

such a cause." In a feeble, exhausted state of health, he had come to the House of Lords, thus to advocate the constitutional dependence of America—a dependence which infatuated Ministers had first taught her to spurn, and to which not even the genius of the mighty Chatham could now reclaim her. A fainting fit was the consequence of his warmth on this occasion—it was also the prelude of his death. He expired shortly after. Lamented and revered by all parties. The tears of America herself honoured his memory. Resentment of his ultimate views was absorbed in warm and deeply rooted affection for the ardent supporter of natural and chartered rights—in admiration for the sublimity of his towering abilities—and for those virtues and services which had forgotten to reward themselves.

Many other Members of the opposition agreed with the Earl in his repugnance to the acknowledgment of American Independence, and in his resolution to meet the dangers of protracted and extended war. The proposition of the Duke of Richmond to recall the British forces from America, to recognize her sovereignty, and to negotiate an advantageous commercial treaty was, therefore, rejected by a considerable majority. It was determined to continue a wasting, hopeless struggle, if the terms conveyed by the Commissioners should fail of their contemplated effect.

As this attempt at conciliation, fruitless as it was, constitutes a remarkable epoch in the history of the revolution, we shall here throw into one point of view the subsequent circumstances connected with it, dwelling upon each particular, in proportion to its relative importance.

Rough  
draughts of  
the concilia-  
tory bills  
reach  
America.

The rough draughts of the conciliatory bills reached America early in April. The effervescence of opinion which an offer of peace upon the terms originally required by America, was calculated to produce among the people, seems to have alarmed the steady friends of Independence. It was apprehended lest the existing popular distresses, and the prospect of continued hardships, should Congress reject the proffered conditions, might swell the torrent of disaffection, so as finally to overwhelm the views and the hopes of the firmest patriots. Under apprehensions of this kind, General Washington, upon receiving the yet vague and doubtful intelligence of a new conciliatory plan, suggested to Congress the policy of preventing this Ministerial poison from being circulated through the veins of a body politic, which, perhaps, had not yet attained sufficient vigour and maturity to baffle its malignant influence.

Are pub-  
lished.

Soon, however, a circumstance occurred which induced Congress to prefer a full and correct publication of these draughts, to the partial and secret manner in which they



were industriously circulated by the emissaries of the enemy.

CHAP.  
XII.

Major General Tryon, the last Royal Governor of New-York, enclosed to General Washington, a copy of the bills, with a certificate of the legitimacy of their origin, and a request that they should by the Commander in Chief be communicated to the army.

1778

Washington immediately transmitted to Congress this extraordinary certificate, and to use his own words, the still more extraordinary and impertinent request of Governor Tryon.

April 18.

By the first of the enclosed draughts, it was declared that "the King and Parliament of Great Britain, would not impose any duty, tax, or assessment, for the purpose of raising a revenue within any of the Colonies, Provinces or plantations, except only such duties as it might be expedient to impose for the regulations of commerce; the net produce of such duties to be always paid and applied to, and for the use of the Colony, Province, or plantations, in which the same should be respectively levied, in the same manner as other duties collected under the authority of the General Assemblies." The second authorized the King "to appoint Commissioners with full powers to treat, consult, and agree with any assembly of men whatsoever in America, and even with individuals, concerning any grievances existing in the government of any of the Colonies, or in the laws of Great Britain extending to them, concerning any contributions to be furnished by the Colonies, and concerning any other regulations which might be for the common good of both countries; with a proviso that such agreement should not be binding until ratified by Parliament. The Commissioners were to be authorized to proclaim a cessation of hostilities—to restore commercial intercourse—and suspend the operation of all obnoxious acts of Parliament, passed since the 10th of February, 1763, in any of the Colonies they should deem fit; and likewise to grant pardons to all descriptions of persons."

Their contents.

The whole was referred to a Committee, whose report could scarcely fail of counteracting the ill-effects apprehended from this new ministerial scheme. The report here alluded to rendered probable the authenticity of the bills by seven distinct arguments, imputing to their authors either folly, insidiousness, impotence, or vice. It then investigated the nature of the same bills, and, after establishing the weakness and insincerity of the enemy, concluded as follows :\*

Proceedings of Congress upon them.

\* All the details relative, not only to this transaction, but to anterior facts of primary importance are to be found in a pamphlet published at the time by Congress, and inserted in the *Remembrancer* for 1778.

CHAP.  
XII.

1778

April 22.

“ It appears evident to your Committee that the said  
 “ bills are intended to operate upon the hopes and fears  
 “ of the good people of these States, so as to create divi-  
 “ sions among them and a defection from the common  
 “ cause, now by the blessing of Divine Providence draw-  
 “ ing near to a favourable issue—that they are the sequel  
 “ of that insidious plan, which, from the days of the Stamp-  
 “ Act down to the present time, has involved this coun-  
 “ try in contention and bloodshed—and that, as in other  
 “ cases, so in this, although circumstances may force them  
 “ to recede from their unjustifiable claims, there can be no  
 “ doubt but they will, as heretofore, upon the first favour-  
 “ able occasion, again display that lust of domination,  
 “ which has rent in twain the mighty Empire of Bri-  
 “ tain.

“ Upon the whole matter, the Committee beg leave to  
 “ report it as their opinion, that as the Americans uni-  
 “ ted in this arduous contest upon principles of common  
 “ interest, for the defence of common rights and privi-  
 “ leges, which union hath been cemented by common ca-  
 “ lamities, and by mutual good offices and affection, so the  
 “ great cause for which they contend, and in which all man-  
 “ kind are interested, must derive its success from the  
 “ continuance of that union. Wherefore any man or body  
 “ of men, who should resume to make any separate or par-  
 “ tial convention or agreement with the Commissioners un-  
 “ der the Crown of Great Britain, or any of them, ought to  
 “ be considered and treated as open and avowed enemies  
 “ of these United States.”

“ And further, your Committee beg leave to report it  
 “ as their opinion, “ that these United States cannot,  
 “ with propriety, hold any conference with any Commis-  
 “ sioners on the part of Great Britain, unless they shall, as  
 “ a Preliminary thereto, withdraw their fleets and armies,  
 “ or else in positive and express terms acknowledge the  
 “ Independence of the said States.

“ And, inasmuch as it appears to be the design of the  
 “ enemies of those States to lull them into a fatal secu-  
 “ rity—to the end that they may act, with a becoming  
 “ weight and importance, it is the opinion of your Com-  
 “ mittee, that the several States be called upon to use  
 “ their most strenuous exertions to have their respective  
 “ quotas of Continental troops in the field as soon as pos-  
 “ sible. And that all the militia of the said States be  
 “ held in readiness to act as occasion may require.”

This report being read, and debated by paragraphs, was  
 unanimously agreed to, and published. By some British  
 historians, it has been represented as fraught not only with  
 asperity, but with insolence. In making this charge, they  
 seem to have forgotten the character of the men who now  
 held out the olive branch; men who had spurned, contemnu-

ed, insulted the Americans—avowed, when in the full career of victory, their intended despotism—in short, combined haughtiness and oppression with perfidy and cruelty. With such men, the strictures of the report were natural and candid—They tended to security, not to insolence unless, indeed, that name be given to the firmness, the energy, the dignity of freedom!

On the next day, Congress came to a resolution, recommending it to the several States to pardon, under certain limitations, such of their deluded citizens as had levied war against the Union. This resolution was ordered to be printed in English and German, and General Washington requested to circulate it among the American levies in the hostile army. As a retort on Tryon for his enclosure of the conciliatory draughts, copies of the above resolve were transmitted to him, with a desire that he would disseminate them among those on whom they were to operate.

The determination of Congress not to treat with Great Britain until she should withdraw her hostile force, or unequivocally acknowledge the independence of America, does them so much more honour, that, at the time of their assuming that dignified attitude, they were yet unacquainted with the final result of the negotiation in France. Intelligence of that result being favourable, reached them only on the 2d day of May, when Mr. Simeon Deane arrived at York Town, with copies of the treaties of commerce and alliance, entered into between France and the United States.\* These treaties were speedily ratified; to the powerful motives which already actuated Congress and the people, they added those of national faith and gratitude. Independence was now placed on a firm, permanent basis; America must be true to herself and to her magnanimous ally!! Such was the universal sentiment manifested on the joyful information conveyed in the following letter, from the American Plenipotentiaries to the President of Congress:

*Passy, near Paris, February 8, 1778.*

Honourable Sir,

“ We have now the great satisfaction  
“ of acquainting you and the Congress, that the treaties  
“ with France are at length completed and signed. The  
“ first is a treaty of amity and commerce, much on the  
“ plan of that projected by Congress; the other is a  
“ treaty of alliance, in which it is stipulated that in case  
“ England declares war against France, or occasions a  
“ war by attempts to hinder her commerce with us, we

CHAP.  
XII.

1778

Pardon offered by  
Congress to  
Loyalists.

French treaties arrive.

May 2:

\* See Appendix, No. 4.



CHAP.  
XII.

1778

" should then make a common cause of it, and join our  
 " forces and Councils, &c. &c. The great aim of this  
 " treaty is declared to be "to establish the liberty, sove-  
 " reignty and Independency, absolute and unlimited, of the  
 " United States, as well in matters of government as of  
 " commerce." And this is guaranteed to us by France, to-  
 " gether with all the countries we possess, or shall pos-  
 " sess, at the conclusion of the war ; in return for which  
 " the States guarantee to France all its possessions in A-  
 " merica.—We found throughout this business the great-  
 " est cordiality in this court ; and no advantage has been  
 " taken or attempted to be taken, of our present difficul-  
 " ties, to obtain hard terms from us ; and such have been  
 " the King's magnanimity and goodness, that he has pro-  
 " posed none which we might not readily have agreed to in  
 " a state of full prosperity and established power. The  
 " principle laid down as the basis of the treaty being, as  
 " declared in the preamble, *the most perfect equality and*  
 " *reciprocity*—The privileges in trade are mutual ; and  
 " none are given to France but what we are at liberty to  
 " give to any other nation. On the whole, we have abun-  
 " dant reason to be satisfied with the good will of this  
 " court, and the nation in general, which we, therefore,  
 " hope will be cultivated by the Congress by every means  
 " that may establish the union and render it permanent."  
 &c. &c.

Magnanimi-  
ty of Louis  
XVI.

Well might the American Plenipotentiaries extol the generosity of the French monarch. He did not, it is true, venture on war, and embark in the cause of his new allies from heroic and magnanimous principles only—No—France had past injuries to revenge—and the present moment was propitious for humbling a haughty, ambitious rival. These national incentives, Louis XVI. avowed with a noble candour. But there was real disinterestedness in assuming the fair ground of equality and reciprocity, with an empire yet in its infancy ; in asking from the United States no commercial favouritism ; in renouncing forever the possession of any territory adjacent to them, although ideas of recovering the former dominions of France in North America might flatter youthful pride, and invite warlike enterprise ; in the extent of what he guaranteed to America, while he himself claimed only the guarantee of a few Islands ; finally, in not stipulating any subsequent compensation for the immense expences which he must necessarily incur in assisting the Americans.\*

\* When the English Elizabeth aided the States of Holland against Spain, she required by treaty that her expences should be refunded after the conclusion of the war, and that the towns of Flushing, and the Brill, with the castle of Rammekins, should, in the mean time, be consigned into her hands by the way of security. Yet, Elizabeth was more extensively interested in the success of the low countries, than France in that of the

These and other influential considerations induced the Congress to pass, without a dissenting voice, a "resolution expressive of the high sense entertained by the United States of the magnanimity and wisdom of his most christian majesty; and directing their ministers to present to him their grateful acknowledgments for his truly magnanimous conduct, and to assure him of their wishes that the friendship so happily commenced might be perpetual."

The exultation which the treaties with France diffused throughout the country, can be better imagined than described. In Virginia, the gladdening intelligence was ushered by a letter from the Delegates of the Commonwealth in the General Congress to Governor Henry. After stating the leading circumstances of the two treaties, that letter added: "It is supposed that the whole Bourbon family (meaning the King of Spain) will speedily accede to these arrangements.—We are shortly to receive considerable stores from France, that come under convoy of a fleet of men of war. The King of Prussia has actually refused to permit the Hessians and the Hanover troops that England had engaged for America, to pass through his territories.—We congratulate you, sir, and our country on this important event; but we beg leave further to observe that it is in our opinion of infinite consequence that the army should be quickly and powerfully reinforced. With a strong army, we shall, under God, be perfectly secure, &c."

The Congress published, at the same time, an animated address, commending the zeal and virtue hitherto displayed by the people, and calling upon them to shew that perseverance and exert those energies which alone could complete the admirable work so happily commenced, and brought so near to its perfection.

In this train of affairs, so unpromising to the ministerial attempt at negotiation, the conciliatory bills, now invested with the technical forms, reached America, and were transmitted to Congress and the Commander in Chief both by Admiral Howe and Sir Henry Clinton. Congress answered that they had already expressed their sentiments upon bills not essentially different from the acts under consideration, and repeated their assurances that "when the King of Great-Britain should be seriously disposed to put an end to the unprovoked and cruel war waged against the United States, they should readily attend to such terms of peace as might consist with the honour of an Indepen-

Conciliatory bills arrive in due form.

May 27.

June 6.

United States, and she herself declared, in a long memorial on the subject, that she was bound by previous engagements, to protect the U. Provinces against an unjust despotism.—This striking contrast, between her conduct and that of Louis, did not escape the people of the American States at the time.

CHAP. XII. dent nation, the interest of their constituents, and the sacred regard they meant to pay to treaties."

1778

Arrival of the Commissioners themselves.

They address Congress.

June 10.

A few days after, the Commissioners themselves arrived. What followed, the historian begs leave to introduce in the words of a Virginia Delegate to the General Congress at the time, whose letters are before him—thus giving to his narrative more animation, interest and life, and bringing the scene into contact with the reader.

"Clinton lately desired a passport from General Washington for Dr. Ferguson, to come to Congress, with a letter from the newly arrived Commissioners, Lord Carlisle, William Eden, and Governor Johnstone. The General refused the passport until Congress should give leave. The letter from Clinton was transmitted here—(York Town)—but the impatience of the Commissioners did not suffer them to wait for an answer. Through the medium of General Washington, they forwarded to Congress a packet containing a letter from themselves with a copy of their commission. Their letter is a combination of fraud, falsehood, insidious offers, and abuse of France,\* concluding with a denial of Independence.

\* The English state papers of that day are marked with coarseness and petulence. An instance of this we will draw from the *Memoire justificatif de la Grande Bretagne*, &c. issued in the name of the King of England, shortly after this and written by the celebrated Gibbon, whose political apostacy was, on that occasion, rewarded by a sinecure of £1000 a year, at the board of trade. The *Justifying memorial*, coming from a high personage, and being chiefly addressed to other Sovereigns, ought it seems, to have been remarkable for magnificence and dignity of reasoning, and for refinement of expression.—The reader may form an idea of the whole, from what follows:

"He (the King of France) has debased his dignity in forming secret connections with the Americans; and after he had exhausted every infamous resource of perfidy and dissimulation, he has dared to avow the solemn treaty which his ministers have concluded with the obscure agents of the English Colonies."

"The American Congress had the impudence to usurp all the rights of sovereignty."

"The intrigues of a few audacious, and wicked leaders." (meaning Hancock, Adams, &c.)

"The same spirit of imposture, &c. continued to reign—"

"A dark Agent" &c. (meaning Dr. Franklin.)

Quotations of a similar stamp might be multiplied—but they are unnecessary. It is well known that to revile America and France had then become systematic.—When Kings write, or other People write for them, such ought not to be their style. It were better to introduce, at once, *their ultima ratio*—the cannon. But the indecorous language of the *justifying memorial* is nothing, when compared to the inconsistency which it ascribes to the King of England.—It charges France with treacherous, secret, systematic hostilities during the last four years. The speeches from the throne, however, in November 1774, October 1775, May 1776 November, 1777, announced friendly and pacific dispositions on her part.—If the facts contained in the *Memoire* were true, and known to the ministers, as is there asserted, why keep them from the knowledge of Parliament, and communicate only assurances of amity? Never was the adage *Quos deus vult perdere, prius dementat*, better applied than to the ministry and their friends!—Further abuse of France, in the course of these diplomatic operations, provoked the chivalric La Fayette, whose sword was ever ready "to leap out of its scabbard" for the honour of his country, to challenge



—The *Sine qua non* being withheld, you may judge what may be the fate of the rest. I do not know whether to call Governor Johnstone an apostate or not. He has been in opposition to the Ministry, and has spoken some speeches in our favour; but I believe he has never been a friend to American Independence. However, there seems no doubt but that he has on this occasion, touched ministerial gold. The others are notorious Ministerialists. It is amazing how the Court of London does mix pride, meanness, cunning and folly, with gasconade and timidity. In short, the strangest composition is there formed that ever disgraced and injured mankind."

The abuse of France alluded to in the above letter was a charge of *insidious interposition*, on her part of *eternal enmity* both to England and the Colonies—and of having *untidated* her treaties with the American Plenipotentiaries at Paris, with a view to prevent the proposed reconciliation, and to prolong a destructive war. This offensive language against a Monarch who had displayed, in respect to America, so much magnanimity and good will, excited in her Representatives a just indignation. The reading of the official letter containing this abuse, was then interrupted, and reluctantly resumed, on the following day. The Congress, through their President, returned for answer, "that nothing but an earnest desire to spare the farther effusion of human blood could have induced them to read a paper, containing expressions so disrespectful to his most Christian Majesty, the good and great ally of the United States, or to consider propositions so derogatory to the honour of an Independent nation—that the acts of the British Parliament, the commission, and the propositions of the Commissioners, supposed the people of the United States to be subjects of Great Britain, and were founded on the *utterly inadmissible* idea of dependence—finally, that, notwithstanding the unjust claims from which this war had arisen, and the savage manner, in which it had been conducted, Congress would be ready to enter upon the consideration of a treaty of peace and commerce, not inconsistent with treaties already subsisting, whenever the King of Great Britain should demonstrate a sincere disposition for that purpose, the only proof of which would be an explicit acknowledgment of their Independence, or the withdrawing his fleets and armies, because upon no other principle could America be said to possess that degree of

June 17

the Earl of Carlisle, as Chief of the Commission, to single combat.—Those who were acquainted with the inbred delicacy of the French nobility on such points did not blame the fiery and over courageous boy—(the name given by Cornwallis to the gallant Marquis)—nor could the Earl of Carlisle be censured for referring the settlement of national disputes to Admiral Byron and Count Destaing.

CHAP. equality and freedom which is essential to the validity of  
XII. national compacts.”

1778

Second letter of the Commissioners to Congress.

July 18.

Not answered.

At the same time, the propositions of the Commissioners were analyzed and combated, in the public papers of that day, with a superiority of argument, which dispelled all the unfavourable impressions apprehended from so peremptory a rejection of conciliatory offers.

Notwithstanding the hopeless and mortifying prospect before them, the British Negotiators thought it expedient again to address the Congress. “The Commissioners,” writes the same Gentleman whom we have already quoted, “have sent us a second letter, very silly, and equally insolent. The Preliminaries insisted on by Congress (an acknowledgment of Independence, or withdrawing their fleets and armies) not having been, either of them, complied with, this letter is to receive no answer. We have detected and fully exposed Governor Johnstone, who, under the plausible guise of friendship and virtue, has endeavoured to bribe members of Congress—the whole Body, indeed, as well as individual members.\* He tries every art to gain admission among us. He abuses his masters, flatters America, and is willing to yield us every thing, if we will be perfidious to our ally, and again submit to the domination of his King and Parliament.—But it is too late in the day—the sunshine of liberty and Independence prevails over the dark arts of tyranny and its tools.”

The firm determination of Congress not to recede, under any change of fortune whatever, from the declaration of Independence, at a time when the connexion with France was neither known, nor suspected; their refusal to negotiate, except as an Independent nation, before the existence of hostilities between France and England, and when they were still at liberty to conclude a separate peace; and, in addition to these circumstances, the intervening arrival of a French fleet, and a French Ambassador in America, must have convinced the British Commis-

---

\* The charge of corruption against Governor Johnstone was founded on several letters written by him to influential characters, in and out of Congress, in which, besides abundance of cajoling and flattery honours and rewards were held out to those who should be instrumental in producing the wished-for re-union; and particularly, on an offer made by him, through Mrs. Ferguson, to Mr. Reed, a member of Congress, for Pennsylvania, of £ 10,000 Sterling, and the best office in the gift of the Crown, if he could effect the return of America to her former dependence. Reed, answered “that he was not worth purchasing: but such as he was, the King of England was not rich enough to do it.”—During the discussion, respecting the Saratoga prisoners, noticed in another place, the Congress declared it incompatible with their honour to hold any further communication or intercourse with Johnstone, upon which he withdrew from the commission.—All the details relative to this fruitless mission—also to the conduct, motives, &c. are to be found in the *Remembrancer for 1778*, &c. That excellent Repository of facts, State-papers &c. ought to be in the hands of every American.

sioners that all their efforts to open a negotiation with the Congress, on the proposed basis, would be vain and fruitless. The present, and every other subsequent proceeding on their part, relative to the object of their mission, may, therefore, be fairly considered as intended to operate on the fears, the doubts, the prejudices, or even the honest partialities of individuals, and, by dividing the public sentiment, to facilitate the success of those violent measures, which, as a terrific corps de reserve, were to appear in the rear of defeated intrigue and folly.

These expressions are not too harsh, when applied to a scheme which neither renounced, nor supported, error with dignity. "It is difficult, says Stedman, a British Historian, wedded to the cause of Royalty, for which he then fought, to defend the Ministers of that day against the imputation of either want of wisdom, or want of firmness. If what was now proposed was a right measure, it ought to have been adopted at first, and before the sword was drawn: on the other hand, if the claims of the mother-country over her Colonies were originally worth contending for, the strength and resources of the nation were not yet so far exhausted, as to justify Ministers in relinquishing them without a farther struggle." And he adds in another place "Such was the issue of this second attempt to bring about a reconciliation, which, whatever might be the effect of it in Great Britain towards inducing a greater union of sentiment on the subject of Colonial affairs, produced in America no good consequence whatever. It flattered the pride of the American Republicans, confirmed them in pursuing the measures which they had adopted, and finally established the authority of Congress, which the Commissioners had in fact recognized by offering to treat with them. On the other hand, it had a most unfavourable effect upon all the inhabitants of the Colonies, who were attached to the British cause. Those who had not yet openly declared their sentiments were discouraged and disheartened; whilst the active and persecuted Loyalist was plunged into the deepest despair. Even the officers of the army felt themselves lowered in their own estimation, when, without any apparent necessity, they saw every thing for which they had been yet contending, in effect given up." If such were, on this subject, the ideas of a Briton, how contemptuously must Americans have thought of the Ministers, and their weak, futile efforts!

The Commissioners  
address  
each State.

A last, desperate effort was now made by the Commissioners. They addressed not only "to the Congress, but to the *Provincial Assemblies*, and to all the inhabitants of the Colonies, of whatever denomination, "a manifesto, in

October 3.



CHAP.  
XII.

1778 .

which they stated their hitherto unavailing efforts towards a re-union of the disjointed parts of the British empire, on terms, the extent and beneficial tendency of which were again presented to view. Notwithstanding the obstacles thrown in their way, they declared their readiness to treat not only with deputies from all the Colonies jointly, but with any provincial Assembly or Convention individually, at any time within the space of forty days from the date of their manifesto. Appealing to persons of every description, in civil, military, or ecclesiastical capacities, or in private stations, and severally pressing on each of these classes such motives as might be supposed most influential, they adjured them all not to let pass so favourable an opportunity of securing their liberties, and their future prosperity and happiness upon a permanent basis. They also proclaimed a general pardon for all treasons and rebellious practices, to such as should within the limited time, withdraw from their opposition to the British Government, and adhere in future to a loyal and regular deportment. At the same time, they threatened with the utmost vengeance which British power could inflict, such as should, after these benevolent offers, obstinately persist in withholding their allegiance from their lawful Sovereign.

“ The policy, as well as the benevolence of Great Britain, they said, have thus far checked the extremes of war, when they tended to distress a people still considered as our fellow subjects, and to desolate a country shortly to become a source of mutual advantage : but when that country professes the unnatural design not only of estranging herself from us, but of mortgaging herself and her resources to our enemies, the whole contest is changed ; and the question is how far Great Britain may, by every means in her power, destroy or render useless a connexion contrived for her ruin, and for the aggrandizement of France. Under such circumstances, the laws of self preservation must direct the conduct of Great Britain ; and if the British Colonies are to become an accession to France, will direct her to render that accession of as little avail as possible to her enemy.”— That all persons residing within what they termed the revolted Colonies, might avail themselves of the pardon thus offered, thirteen copies of it were immediately executed under the hands and seals of the Commissioners, one of which was transmitted by a flag of truce to each of the States.

This attempt at negotiating with any other than the constituted authorities of the country, was duly resented by Congress, “ as contrary to the laws of nations, and utterly subversive of the confidence necessary for those means which have been devised to alleviate the horrors of war, among civilized nations.” They declared, there-

Threaten  
extermi-  
nation.

fore, that the agents employed to distribute such papers, were not entitled to the protection of a flag; and recommended it to the executive authorities in the respective States, to arrest and confine such agents. At the same time, strong in the purity of their own motives and conduct, and relying on the good sense, patriotism and virtue of the people, they themselves published the manifesto of the British Commissioners, with proper comments upon its tenor.—Even in England the spirit of rage and extermination breathed in that manifesto, was vehemently reprobated. The maxim that Great Britain might, *by every means in her power*, desolate and destroy what it ceased to be her interest to preserve, was pronounced utterly inconsistent with the law of nations; and no measure of the Ministers or their Agents was, by the real friends of British honour and British liberty, received with more indignation than this proclamation to destroy by fire and sword a large continent, lost by oppression and tyranny, and unconquerable by the force of arms. The answer of the Congress to this proclamation was calm and deliberate, yet strong and energetic. After contrasting their mode of conducting the war with that adopted and pursued by Great Britain, they solemnly declared “that, should she persist in her present career of barbarity, they would take such exemplary vengeance as should deter others from a like conduct; and, appealing to that God who searcheth the hearts of men for the rectitude of their intentions, they, in his holy presence, also declared, that as they were not moved by any light and hasty suggestions of anger and revenge, so through every possible change of fortune, they would adhere to this their determination.” Dire extremity! Melancholy, yet commendable resolve! The wrath of God and the curses of mankind are only with those who begin the horrid work of devastation and blood.—The enemies of America forced her to proclaim to them her accumulated injuries in the rough sounds of retaliated barbarity.

The time limited by the Commissioners in the manifesto expired on the eleventh of November: They remained at New-York even beyond that time, in expectation of overtures from some of the States, but none were made. Every where their emissaries and their propositions were indignantly spurned. The following extract from the Journal of the House of Delegates, shews the sentiments and conduct of Virginia, in respect to this diplomatic manœuvre.

CHAP.  
XII.

1778

Declaration  
of Congress  
thereupon.

October 30.

Virginia re-  
fuses to re-  
ceive the  
manifesto of  
the Com-  
missioners.

*In the House of Delegates, Saturday, October 17, 1778.*

His Excellency the Governor having received information from Major Thomas Mathews, the officer commanding at Fort Henry, that a British officer has arrived there, charged with dispatches from the enemy at New York, di-

CHAP.  
XII.

1778

rected to the Speaker of the Assembly to the several officers of Government in this State, and the Ministers of the Gospel, which the said Major Mathews has refused to receive till he shall know the pleasure of the Governor therein, and he having laid the said information before this House, and requested their advice how he shall proceed :

*Resolved*, therefore, That his Excellency the Governor be requested to inform Major Mathews that this House highly approved his conduct in refusing to receive the several dispatches brought by the British officer from New-York.

*Resolved*, That his Excellency, the Governor, be requested to direct Major Thomas Mathews to inform the officer charged with the dispatches from New York, that they look on this attempt as calculated to mislead and divide the good people of this country, and that they highly resent the behaviour of him, and those who sent him, as they must know that this State ought to hold no such correspondence with the enemy of America.

*Resolved*, That his Excellency the Governor be requested to direct Major Mathews to order the officer charged with the dispatches immediately to depart this State with the same, and to inform him that, in future, any person making a like attempt shall be secured, as an enemy to America.

The Commissioners effect nothing.

Thus, did this attempt to kindle a flame in the heart of each State, and to break the chains of Federal union, an attempt upon which the forlorn hope of the British Commissioners was placed, not without some confidence of success, prove as fruitless as all their anterior measures. The voice of America was heard in a tone which could not be mistaken—that of a people sore under the accumulated injuries of the British nation, and determined to maintain what had now become the only object of contest, Independence—of a people equally uninfluenced by professions of friendship, which they could no longer trust and by hostile menaces of future havoc, which they no longer dreaded !



## CHAPTER XIII.

---

*Evacuation of Philadelphia—Battle of Monmouth—American army marches to the Hudson—Fate of General Lee—The Count D'Estaing arrives on the coast of Virginia—Sails for New-York—Reception of the French Minister by the Congress—Speech of Mr. Gerard—Answer thereto—D'Estaing goes to Rhode Island—Situation of affairs there—D'Estaing quits Newport to fight Lord Howe—A storm separates the two fleets—D'Estaing retires to Boston—Sullivan raises the siege of Newport—Engages the British—Retreats from Rhode Island—Zeal of La Fayette—Harmony restored between the Americans and the French—Predatory expeditions of the British—Surprise and massacre of Baylor's regiment—Pulaski's infantry is cut off—D'Estaing sails for the West Indies—Dispositions of the British and the Americans for the winter—Proceedings of the Legislature of Virginia—Case of Josiah Philips—Military measures—Other measures—Depreciation and its effects—Further proceedings of the Legislature.*

IN order to present a clear and connected view of the different steps which conducted the preposterous conciliatory scheme of Lord North to its abortive issue, we have interrupted the regular course of events, in 1778. Let us now look back ; and first consider the early effects of the connexion lately formed with France.

We have already remarked that France had accumulated injuries to avenge. For about a century, it had been the invariable system of Great Britain to attack her, whenever extensively engaged in continental feuds. The attention and resources of the French Government being thus divided, and naval concerns yielding to more immediate and more important calls on its solicitude, operations by land were alone prosecuted with a suitable degree of vigour. The consequence was, that when, in the course of the long and bloody contest which ended in 1763, France had nearly exhausted all her energies, Great Britain not only preserved her strength entire, but derived an accession of power from the losses of her rival, and reaped, with equal ease and avidity, the fruits of the war. The family compact, and the alliance with Austria, having secured the tranquillity of France on the continent, now enabled

CHAP.  
XIII.

---

CHAP. her to act. in her turn, on the offensive against the proud  
XIII. usurper of maritime Dominion.

1778

The message of the King of England to his Parliament, upon the notification of the friendly arrangements between France and America, their answer to that message, and the suspension of diplomatic intercourse, sufficiently evinced that war between the two countries had become unavoidable. Measures were taken accordingly. Extraordinary preparations animated the numerous harbours of France; and that navy which, in 1763, England boasted of having annihilated, appeared, in 1778, again to rise from its ruins with renovated strength and additional splendour. From different parts of the kingdom troops were marched down to the sea-side, where they formed large encampments opposite to the shores of Great Britain. This menacing aspect created in England universal alarm; for, although the project of a descent might be deemed by some a gigantic chimera, still the defenceless state\* of the three Kingdoms afforded to the generality of the people just motives of apprehension. The daring American Privateer, Paul Jones, had alone spread consternation on several parts of the English coast.

Evacuation  
of Philadel-  
phia.

It was early conjectured that a naval force should be sent from France to America. In this case, Philadelphia and the Delaware would become insecure situations for the British forces. The Ministers, therefore, directed a prompt retreat to New-York. We have already adverted to the mysterious inertness of Sir William Howe. This was so strikingly remarkable that almost every historian has attempted to point out its cause. Some have referred it to a natural indolence of disposition, not incompatible with that exalted personal bravery which Sir William was well known to possess; others to a cautious circumspection, inculcated by the murderous affairs at Breed's-Hill and Red-Bank; or to a persuasion that the ferment of the public mind would gradually subside, and a growing lassitude of the deprivations and hardships connected with resistance, operate more efficiently than military enterprize and achievement, in recalling the people to their antient allegiance. However this may be, the supineness and inactivity of Sir William did not escape censure, and that censure created disgust on his part. He requested to be recalled, and General Clinton became his successor. No sooner had the latter assumed the Command in Chief of the British army, than he took active measures for the evacuation of Philadelphia. This, owing to maritime assistance, was effected with ease. From the point of land

June 18.

---

\* A letter from Lord G. Germain to General Howe, some time before, stated that *there was not a single mattress left in the island, and but one battalion of the regiment of artillery in Great-Britain.*

formed below the Town by the confluence of the Schuylkill and the Delaware, the troops were conveyed to the opposite part of the Jersey shore, with such quantity of baggage and provisions as was judged necessary for a route on which many obstructions and delays were expected.— Heavy and cumbrous articles were put on board the ships, together with the property of merchants and other persons attached to the British cause. Most of those persons retreated with the army or the fleet. A body of American troops immediately re-occupied Philadelphia; and soon after the Congress removed to it from York-Town, where they had lately held their sittings.

General Washington, who with the most deliberate prudence combined an ardent spirit of enterprize, contemplated a blow at the enemy, after crossing the Delaware. A further estimate of relative strength, and the concurring advice of the general officers, prevented the attempt. The present army was only one fourth of the promised number;\* such of the new levies as were forwarded by the States, reached the scene of action long after the fixed time. Every appearance confirming the idea that the enemy intended to retreat, through Jersey, to New-York, measures had been taken to impede their progress by breaking up the roads and bridges, and increasing natural difficulties in every possible manner. With a brigade of Continentals, joined by the Jersey militia under Dickenson, Maxwell had made dispositions which enabled him to hover, in light parties, on the flanks of the enemy, and efficiently to co-operate with the main body of the Americans, should opportunity invite a general action.

Proceeding along the Eastern bank of the Delaware, Clinton, with an army heavily incumbered, slowly and quietly moved, apparently courting rather than avoiding an attack. Washington, in the mean time watching the development of the enemy's intention, approached the Delaware, which he crossed at Corryel's Ferry, directing his march over the high grounds in the vicinity, so as to retain in his power the choice of battle or inaction, as circumstances should recommend either, and the ability of opposing any eventual movement against the important passes in the Highlands. The enemy, fearing the passage of the Rariton, and the force under Gates, now again at the head of the Northern department, pursued the road leading to the heights of Middletown, and thence to Sandy-Hook. Morgan was detached to annoy their right flank, while Dickenson should harrass their left, and Cadwalader hang on their rear. Washington was still inclined to strike

June 22.

---

\* The army was to have consisted, in the Spring, of 40,000 men; it amounted only to ten thousand. The British were nearly equal in number; their advantages in point of discipline, arms, &c. were obvious.



CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

a decisive blow, but his general officers continued to oppose the idea. They, however, agreed on the expediency of reinforcing with fifteen hundred chosen men the detachment on the left of the British.—Another corps, one thousand strong, under the direction of Wayne, was ordered forward.—Lee waving his right to command the whole, the task devolved on the Marquis De La Fayette, with whose inclination an attack on the retreating foe perfectly agreed.—Motives of delicacy induced Lee to claim the post of honour, which he had at first declined ; and, to indulge him. Washington detached a second corps to join La Fayette, placing the united advance under the direction of Major-General Lee, should the Marquis not yet have formed any enterprize. General Clinton, at this time, occupied a strong position at Monmouth Court-House, twelve miles from the heights of Middletown. He must be attacked in the intermediate space, or effect his retreat without injury. Under these circumstances, Lee received orders from the Commander in Chief “to attack the British rear, unless there should be powerful reasons to the contrary ;” and was, at the same time, informed of the approach of the main army to support him. Clinton had remarked the movements of the American parties hourly increasing on both their flanks. He conjectured that their design was upon his baggage, which had been entrusted to the care of Gen. Knyphausen ; and he resolved, with a view to save that baggage, to make on the corps in his rear a vigorous attack, so as to cause those parties to be recalled. For this purpose, he held back the elite of his army, and, on the morning of the 28th of June, sending Knyphausen onward, remained on the heights, near Monmouth Court-House, till about 8 o’clock, when he descended into the plain, and took up the line of march. Lee pressed forward to execute his orders, directed Wayne to attack a party which covered the enemy’s rear, so as to halt them, whilst he himself should gain their front by a shorter road on their left, and thus intercept the support which they might expect from the line. Soon he perceived that the enemy’s force was much greater than had been supposed, and a retrograde movement of the British rear convinced him that the foe had planned an attack. The ground on which he stood was peculiarly insecure ; an extensive piece of marshy soil, impervious, except in a few spots, stretched in his rear, and threatened to intercept both retreat and support. This induced Lee to fall back, in order to regain the heights from which he had descended, and assume there a position which would enable him to give to the assailants a severe and effectual check. The enemy had commenced a cannonade on one of the flying parties that harassed his flanks ; from this Washington concluded that his orders had been executed, and he rapidly advanc-

CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

Battle of  
Monmouth.

June 28.

ed to support the corps in front. In effecting his retrograde movement, Lee had been compelled to skirmish with the enemy, but the injury was inconsiderable on either side. Riding onward, the Commander in Chief met Lee thus retreating. Of his motives for this movement, of his design to make, on proper ground, a vigorous stand—the latter had given no intimation. With equal surprise and mortification, Washington, therefore, beheld the supposed disgrace of his troops. Addressing himself to Lee with momentary warmth, he required explanation, and received only an unbecoming answer. A judicious and strong position, however, was immediately taken—and the enemy not only checked, but repulsed. In breaking the impetuosity of the onset, Lee performed conspicuous service, and was then ordered to a station in the rear. After a keen contest, both parties, sinking under the intense heat of the weather and excessive fatigue, and separated, moreover, by the intervention of the night, suspended the murderous work. It was the intention of the American General to renew the battle the next morning. For this purpose, he passed the night in his cloak, in the midst of his soldiers, who lay on their arms, close to the British. The latter, after collecting and removing their wounded, resumed their march, in such order and silence, that their retreat was unobserved by the adjacent American troops. Sir Henry completed his retreat without further molestation—joining Knyphausen on the unassailable and secure heights of Middletown, whence he proceeded to Sandy-Hook, where Admiral Howe was ready to receive the baggage and army, for transportation to New-York.

The action at Monmouth was not decisive. The enemy claimed the victory. By his nocturnal movement, however, he tacitly resigned the palm to Washington. The loss of the British exceeded that of the Americans.\* Among the slain, on the side of the latter was Major Dickenson, a brave Virginian officer. The day was so intensely hot that many on each side, fell and expired without a wound. Independently of their loss on that occasion, the

---

\* Clinton stated his loss in dead and missing, at four officers, and 184 privates—his wounded at 16 officers, and 154 privates. Stedman says the same. Henry Lee, who was there, says that the Americans buried on the field of battle 249 British dead. Another mistake of Gen. Clinton is *about the moon*. On June 24, 1778, the new moon, according to Poor Will's Almanack, printed at Philadelphia, was at 10 in the morning, and on the 28th of June, it set 59 minutes after 10 at night. Sir Henry writes, "I took (at 10 at night) advantage of the moon light to rejoin Knyphausen." If Sir Henry decamped at 10, he had but little advantage of the moon setting 59 minutes after 10, and only four days old. If, as Washington says, he set off about 12, he had none at all. The loss of the Americans, according to Marshall, was 69 killed—160 wounded—130 missing, many of whom returned soon after.

CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

American  
army  
marches to  
the Hudson.

Fate of Ge-  
neral Lee.

British suffered considerably from desertion, in the course of their retreat through Jersey. Several soldiers, especially of the foreign corps, had married in Philadelphia; they abandoned the British standard, as soon as an opportunity was offered. Other causes thinned the enemy's ranks.

The American troops, and particularly the corps under Wayne, and the artillery, gave at Monmouth, signal proofs of inherent courage, heightened by that confidence which experience and discipline never fail to inspire. The Commander in Chief and the army, received from Congress the grateful applause to which they were entitled. The American army then moved onward to the Western shore of the Hudson, with a view to protect those passes, which were justly considered as the American *Thermopylae*.

The retreat of Lee is generally allowed to have been judicious, necessary, beneficial. It probably saved the American advance from utter destruction. Thus far, he was entitled to the applause and gratitude of America; but he was guilty of an unpardonable neglect in not communicating to the Commander in Chief his reasons for a retrograde movement, dictated by a change of circumstances in the British rear, and executed with a quickness of decision which did real honour to his military genius; he was guilty of giving the pernicious example of insubordination by an unbecoming and disrespectful reply to the explanation demanded from him by the same Commander in Chief, when unexpectedly met in the attitude of retreat: this second error he aggravated by the haughty and resentful letters which he subsequently addressed to General Washington. But these faults fell far short of "disobedience to orders" or "a shameful retreat." The inconsistency of the sentence passed upon him by the court martial that found him guilty of those heavy charges, has justly been remarked by every historian. His blood alone could have atoned for such complicated guilt—with such a load of criminality on his head, he ought to have been cashiered and shot—still, he was only suspended for one year. It was not the punishment—it was the imputation, which clouded the condemned General's intellect, and envenomed his heart, souring the natural irritability of his temper into a violent misanthropy. Bitter and delirious invective, marked a devotion to envy and hate, darkened the remainder of a life, whose meridian splendour had promised a bright and serene evening.\* But whilst truth

---

\* Major-General Charles Lee, died in Philadelphia, of a defluxion on the lungs, Oct. 2, 1782. His last moments were attended only by his favorite Italian servant, and Mr. Oswald, the printer, who had served under him as an officer. He had taken lodgings in the Philadelphia tavern, called the Conestoga waggon, designed chiefly for the accommodation of common country-men. "The clergy of different denominations, the President of



sketches the melancholy picture, let the generous tear of sympathy blot it out! Let nothing of Lee be remembered but the effulgence of his genius—and the essential services which he rendered to the cause of liberty, especially in the Southern States! Indeed, his foibles and oddities had scarcely any effect in which history is interested.

At the very time that the British army was embarking at Sandy-Hook for New York, an event occurred which gave to the Americans the mastery of the sea, at least on their own coast. We have adverted to the active maritime preparations of France. An important branch of these was the equipment at Toulon of a fleet, consisting of 12 ships of the line, and four frigates. With a considerable number of seamen and land-troops on board, that fleet sailed on the 13th of April. Adverse winds greatly retarded its progress. It reached the coast of Virginia only on the 5th of July. The Count D'Estaing was accompanied by Mr. Silas Deane, and the Chevalier Gerard, who had negotiated, in the name of his most christian Majesty, the treaties between France and the United States, and been appointed to represent his Sovereign near the new Republic.

The Count D'Estaing arrives on the coast of Virginia. July 5.

The destination of this force was the Delaware. Had not unpropitious circumstances protracted the Count's passage to the unusual space of eighty-seven days, he would have found Lord Howe still within the Capes of the Delaware, with an inferior fleet; and it is not extravagant to suppose that a zealous and well-directed co-operation with the American forces, would have terminated not only in the destruction of that fleet, but also in the capture of the British army. But the golden moment had elapsed. D'Estaing disappointed in his original object, steered Northwardly, and, on the 11th of July, anchored off New York, intending an attack on the British fleet in the harbour of that place.

Sails for New-York July 11.

Before we trace his further operations, let us turn our eyes to the novel and interesting scene, which the reception of the representative of a friendly and powerful monarch, presented in Philadelphia.

No sooner was intelligence received of the arrival of the French Minister in the Delaware, on his passage to Philadelphia, where the Congress had resumed their sittings,

Reception of the French Mi-

Congress, several Members of Congress, the President and some Members of the Council of Pennsylvania, his excellency the Minister Plenipotentiary of France, Mr Marbois, Secretary of the Embassy, the Minister of Finance, General Baron Viomenil, Duke de Lausanne, the Minister at War, and several other officers of distinction, French and American, and a respectable concourse of citizens attended his funeral, and paid military honours to his remains."—*Vir. Gaz.* Oct. 19, 1782

CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

nister by  
the Con-  
gress.

than a Committee was appointed by that venerable Body to wait on him, and a house prepared for his residence. A public audience was soon afterwards given him by the supreme national Council of confederated America. Proper measures were taken to impart to that ceremony a solemnity and dignity worthy of the two allied nations. R. H. Lee, and Samuel Adams accompanied the Chevalier, in a coach provided by Congress, to the State-House, where he was received with open doors. Besides the members of Congress, about two hundred Gentlemen attended the audience. Among these were the Vice-President and Members of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, the Speaker and Members of the Legislature of that State, several foreigners of distinction, and officers of the army. A semi-circle was formed by the Congressional Delegates, at one extremity of which sat the President, and at the other the Representative of the French Monarch. The Minister's Secretary delivered his Credentials, after the reading of which, he himself arose and addressed Congress in the following speech:

“ GENTLEMEN,

Speech of  
Mr. Gerard.

“ The Connexion formed by the King, my master, with the United States of America, is so agreeable to him, that he could no longer delay sending me to reside among you, for the purpose of cementing it. It will give his Majesty great satisfaction to learn that the sentiments which have shone forth on this occasion, justify that confidence with which he has been inspired by the zeal and character of the Commissioners of the United States in France, the wisdom and fortitude which have directed the resolutions of Congress, and the courage and perseverance of the people they represent: a confidence which, you know, Gentlemen, has been the basis of that truly amicable and disinterested system, on which he has treated with the United States.”

“ It is not his Majesty's fault that the engagements he has entered into did not establish your Independence and repose, without the further effusion of blood, and without aggravating the calamities of mankind, whose happiness it is his highest ambition to promote and secure. But since the hostile measures and designs of the common enemy have given to engagements purely eventual, an immediate, positive, permanent, and indissoluble force, it is the opinion of the King, my master, that the allies should turn their whole attention to fulfil those engagements in the manner most useful to the common cause, and best calculated to obtain that peace which is the object of the alliance.”

“ It is upon this principle that he has hastened to send you a powerful assistance, which you owe only to his friendship, to the sincere regard he has for every thing which relates to the advantage of the United States, and to his desire of contributing with efficacy to establish your repose and prosperity upon an honourable and solid foundation. And further, it is his expectation that the principles which may be adopted by the respective governments, will tend to strengthen those bonds of union which have originated in the mutual interest of the two nations.”

“ The principal object of my instructions is to connect the interests of France with those of the United States. I flatter myself, Gentlemen, that my past conduct in the affairs which concern them, has already convinced you of the determination I feel to endeavour to obey my instructions in such a manner as to deserve the confidence of Congress, the friendship of its members, and the esteem of the citizens of America.”

To this address, Henry Laurens, then President of Congress, returned the following answer :

“ Sir

“ The treaties between his Most Christian Majesty and the United States of America, so fully demonstrate his wisdom and magnanimity, as to command the reverence of all nations. The virtuous citizens of America in particular, can never forget his beneficent attention to their violated rights, nor cease to acknowledge the hand of a gracious Providence, in raising them up so powerful and illustrious a friend. It is the hope and opinion of Congress, that the confidence his Majesty reposes in the firmness of these States will receive additional strength from every day’s experience.

Answer  
thereto.

“ This assembly are convinced that, had it rested solely with the Most Christian King, not only the Independence of these States would have been universally acknowledged, but their tranquility fully established. We lament that lust of domination which gave birth to the present war, and has prolonged and extended the miseries of mankind. We ardently wish to sheath the sword and spare the further effusion of blood; but we are determined, by every measure in our power, to fulfil those eventual engagements, which have acquired positive and permanent force from the hostile designs and measures of the enemy.

“ Congress have reason to believe that the assistance so wisely and so generously sent, will bring Great Britain to a sense of justice and moderation, promote the common interests of France and America, and secure peace and tranquillity on the most firm and honourable founda-



CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

tion ; neither can it be doubted that those who administer the powers of government within the several States of this Union, will cement that connection with the subjects of France, the beneficial effects of which have already been so sensibly felt.

" Sir, from the experience we have had of your exertions to promote the true interests of our country, as well as your own, it is with the highest satisfaction Congress receive as the first Minister from his Most Christian Majesty, a Gentleman whose past conduct affords a happy presage that he will merit the confidence of this Body, the friendship of its Members, and the esteem of the citizens of America."

After this, the Minister retired, again accompanied by Mr. Lee and Mr. Adams. In the afternoon, a splendid entertainment was given him by Congress ; the most respectable citizens of Philadelphia, and other distinguished characters, participated in the *fete*.

Situated as America then was, this audience exhibited, to her a spectacle truly magnificent and pleasing. It gave to her infant empire a character of maturity ; it confirmed the principles on which the alliance was founded, and drew the two nations close to each other. The appellation of "very Dear, Great Friends and Allies," by which Louis XVI had addressed the Representatives of the Union, in the credentials of his Minister, was productive of much popular enthusiasm ; it was re-echoed throughout the country, with blessings on the Monarch whom the people considered as the source of every kind act towards America. The Gazettes of that day are filled with effusions in his praise.

Unfortunately, circumstances did not favour the early exertions of France in behalf of her Ally. We have seen D'Estaing baffled in his design upon the British fleet in the Delaware. The elements continued to thwart his active, enterprising spirit. The attempt which he meditated against the same fleet in the harbour of New-York, was soon ascertained to be impracticable, the water on the bar, at the entrance of that harbour, not being of sufficient depth to admit the passage of the largest French ships, without the most imminent danger. He, therefore, quitted New-York, without striking the intended blow, steered to the Southward, as far as the mouth of the Delaware, and suddenly changing his course, steered for Rhode-Island, against which an expedition had been concerted between him and the Commander in Chief. A kind of fatality seems to have attached itself to D'Estaing's movements. The British ministry, apprized of his equipment at Toulon, had detached Vice-Admiral Byron to intercept him. The Count, however, passed the Straits of Gibraltar sooner than had been anticipated, and Byron followed him to

D'Estaing  
goes to  
R. Island.

July 29.

1778

**America.** The British squadron also met with tempestuous weather—separated—and arrived in distress, on different and remote parts of the American coast. Soon after D'Estaing had quitted Sandy-Hook, four ships of war reached that station, and reinforced Admiral Howe.—Had D'Estaing continued a few days longer before New-York, these ships must, indubitably have yielded to his superior strength.

Against Rhode Island, an attack had, for some time, been in contemplation. General Sullivan, who commanded in its neighbourhood, had, previously to the arrival of the French fleet, made preparations for that purpose. Unhappily, two successful incursions of the British, the one under Campbell, and the other under Eyre, nearly annihilated the means of transportation and hostility, already in a satisfactory state of forwardness.—With fresh ardour, they had been resumed—and the co-operation of the French fleet, together with the spirited aid of numerous volunteers hourly flocking to Sullivan's banners, opened the most flattering prospect of success. To ensure this, the militia of the Eastern States had been called into the field; and General Greene had advanced to Tiverton, with a detachment of Continental and State troops, and some militia.—Sullivan was stationed on the main, near the town of Providence.

Situation of  
affairs there

In Rhode Island the British Major Pigott commanded. He had lately received considerable reinforcements from New-York; six thousand choice troops now composed the garrison.—Concentrating his forces, Pigott abandoned Connecticut Island, and some works which he had erected at the North end of Rhode Island, to prevent invasion from the adjacent Continent.—All his force was collected in Newport.

D'Estaing blocked up the three entrances to Rhode Island. At sight of his squadron, the British consigned to the flames several small galleys and frigates, employed in guarding those passages. This alone could prevent them from becoming the prey of the French.

A plan of joint assault was arranged by the Count and Sullivan. On the 8th of August, D'Estaing entered the harbour, receiving and returning the fire of the British batteries as he passed them, and anchored at a small distance from Newport. Some unlucky delays prevented Sullivan from landing on that day, in conformity with the arrangement before noticed. The next day was, therefore, mutually agreed upon, for the attack thus inevitably postponed.—The punctilious delicacy of military characters, especially in the service of monarchs, where rank and title, and grade, and the etiquette attendant on them, acquire an importance unknown in Republics, produced transient ill-humour, chiefly on the part of the Count, who

August 8.

CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

August 9.

D'Estaing  
quits New-  
port to fight  
Lord Howe.

August 10.

A storm se-  
parates the  
two fleets.

August 11.

probably was otherwise chagrined at the endless disappointments of his ill-fated enterprize.—Harmony, however, was soon restored ; and every thing appeared in readiness for the operations of the succeeding day. At dawn, the whole American army landed on the North extremity of Rhode Island, and immediately prepared for the execution of the concerted attack. At this moment, a British fleet appeared in sight, and drew the entire attention of the French commander. Lord Howe, with a force now increased to eight line of battle-ships, five ships of fifty guns, two of forty-four guns, and four frigates, with three fire-ships, two bombs, and a number of smaller vessels, had come out of the harbour before New York, determined to hazard an engagement with the Count, for the relief of Newport. After sailing close into the land, and communicating with the garrison, he came to an anchor off Point Judith, a little to the Southward. When Admiral Howe first appeared, the wind blew directly into the harbour. This circumstance chained D'Estaing to his station, and prevented his closing with Howe. The next morning, however, the wind suddenly changed to the North-East ; and the French Admiral, eagerly seizing on this favourable circumstance, immediately sailed out of the harbour, and forming his ships in order of battle, as he came out, bore down upon the British fleet. Lord Howe judged it prudent to decline a conflict in which, beside the weather gage, his opponent possessed the advantage of superior weight of metal. He, therefore, weighed anchor, and stood to the Southward. D'Estaing hastened to pursue him, and the two fleets soon were beyond the reach of the eye.—For nearly two days, this retreat and this pursuit continued.—Suddenly, a most tremendous storm arose, and parted the hostile fleets, when, at last, on the point of coming to action. Such was the vehemence of the wind, and such the fury of the sea, that even the individual ships of each squadron were separated and dispersed. When the violence of the storm abated, each Admiral endeavoured, but in vain, to collect his scattered squadron. A few days, however, brought the two fleets to the harbours of New York and Newport.

During their dispersion, single vessels accidentally met ; partial insult and injury ensued ; but no important capture was made. The *Renown*, of fifty guns, fell in, on the evening of the 13th, with the *Languedoc*. D'Estaing's own ship, of ninety guns, so much damaged by the tempest that she was without either masts or rudder. The *Count* ordered an American Pilot, then on board, to hail the approaching vessel. No answer was returned ; but the *Renown*, with full sail, running close under the stem of the *Languedoc*, suddenly hoisted English colours, poured in all her fire, and precipitately retired. The insulted ship



CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

August 16.

discharged two chase-guns, and no further attempt was made against her. The same evening, the Preston of 50 guns, attacked the Tonnant of 80 guns, with her main-mast only standing : a fierce contest began, but darkness soon put an end to its rage. On the 16th, the Cæsar, a French 74, fell in with the Isis, a British ship of 50 guns—engaged her—and would have taken her, had not some other English ships hove in sight \*. The circumstance induced the Cæsar to put before the wind, and leave the Isis considerably injured in her masts, sails, and rigging. Much prowess was displayed on both sides ; but the damage in killed and wounded, fell chiefly on the Cæsar.

On land, the rage of the tempest was no less fatal than on sea. On the 12th an intense rain began to fall, accompanied with a furious wind ; during the night, the horrors of the storm increased, and as neither marquee nor tent could stand, both the officers and soldiers remained exposed to all its violence, without cover of any kind. The ground was so wet that they could not lay on it their wearied frames ; and the wind blew with such impetuosity as to render it difficult for them to stand up. Several of the soldiers perished in the storm ; many horses died ; the greatest part of the muskets became unfit for use ; a vast quantity of ammunition was irreparably damaged ; in short, the situation of the army was truly deplorable. The British garrison, having been screened under the roofs of Newport, or in their works from the severity of the tempest, were fresh, alert, and vigorous. Had they, as soon as the weather cleared up, assailed the enfeebled, distressed, dispirited Americans, it is supposed that the result would have proved fatal to the latter. They remained inactive, however ; and Sullivan's army, soon recovering their late alacrity and vigour, began their approaches towards the British lines, anxiously, yet confidently looking for the return of the French fleet.

August 14

It re-appeared on the 19th ; but D'Estaing was, by his instructions, peremptorily directed to sail for Boston, August 19.

---

\* We follow Heath's account, as he conversed with the officers of the Cæsar, soon after. The Captain of the Cæsar was not the celebrated Bonaparte, as Stedman says. His name was Raimondis. "On his being brought up to Boston, our General paid him a visit, and expressed to him his regret for the arm he had lost ; to which the Captain replied, although very weak through the great loss of blood he had sustained, that he was ready to lose his other arm in the cause of the Americans."

*Heath's Memoirs, page 192.*

And Heath, throughout whose work, there runs an admirable vein of genuine sensibility and soldier-like candour, thereupon exclaims, "Remember this, ye Americans, in future times !"

Raimondis got well at Boston, and returned to France soon after in the frigate *The Alliance*, with the Marquis de La Fayette.

**CHAP.**  
**XIII.**

**1778**

D'Estaing  
retires to  
Boston.

should any disaster befall his fleet, or a superior British naval force appear on the coast. The effects of the late storm on several of his ships, and the well ascertained arrival of several ships of war at New-York, had induced his officers unanimously to advise strict obedience to the letter of his instructions. Jealousy, it appears, prompted these officers to thwart the wishes of the Count, and to obstruct, whenever a plausible motive occurred, the advancement of his military fame. The Count was properly a land officer ; and his appointment over them, in a naval capacity, they silently, but deeply resented. Thus situated, D'Estaing found it necessary to comply with his instructions, and to retire to Boston. for the purposes of refitting his shattered fleet. In this resolution, when once declared, he inflexibly persisted ; neither the intreaties of La Fayette, nor the remonstrances of Sullivan and Greene, could induce him to deviate from his determination.

Sullivan raises the siege  
of Newport.

This measure rendered impracticable the immediate reduction of Newport ; nay, the situation of the American army now became insecure. The numerous volunteers who had joined it, disheartened by the departure of the fleet, daily went home in great numbers, so that the force which ultimately remained was scarcely equal to the British garrison. It was rumoured, too, that Sir Henry Clinton had left New York with four thousand men, to relieve Rhode Island. It was, therefore, resolved to raise the siege of New-port and retire to the North end of the Island, there to wait for the return of D'Estaing, who was now moored in Nantasket road.

August 28.

Engages  
the British.

August 29.

To effect this, Sullivan took judicious measures. He directed the works on the Northern extremity of the Island to be repaired and strengthened: sent off the heaviest parts of his baggage to the main, where a strong post was secured. After this, he silently evacuated the camp before Newport. in the night, and gained a march of several hours, unobserved by the British army, leaving behind him parties of light troops to cover his retreat, by skirmishing with the British troops, as they should advance. Thus the main body was enabled to form an encampment on the advantageous ground in view, without any molestation. When day light discovered this movement to the enemy, they advanced with their whole force in two columns. The American light troops, keeping up a retreating fire, slowly fell back on the main army, now arranged for action on the ground of their encampment. The enemy formed on Quaker Hill, a favourable position in front of the American line. They then began a cannonade, which was returned with double force. Several skirmishes took place between the advanced parties. Two ships of war and some small armed vessels of the British, having gained the right flank of the Americans, and com-

CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

Retreats  
from Rhode  
Island  
August 30.

menced a fire, the enemy bent their whole force that way—twice they attempted to dislodge General Greene, who commanded the right wing, from an advanced redoubt—twice they were driven back in great confusion—in greater numbers, they made a third attempt—timely aid was sent forward, and baffled their most obstinate efforts.—They retired, in disorder, to the high ground which they had first occupied, leaving their dead and wounded behind them. In that affair, the American troops displayed admirable firmness, and intrepidity, preserving in the face of the enemy the calm and regular attitude of veterans. The praise bestowed by Sullivan both on his officers and his men, was merited.—His loss in killed, wounded and missing, amounted to 211. It was greatly exceeded by that of the British.

The next morning, undoubted intelligence was received that Sir Henry Clinton was approaching with the expected reinforcement. It was likewise ascertained that a long time must elapse before the return of the French Squadron. Under these circumstances, the situation of the army scarcely allowed one moment for deliberation. A retreat became imperiously necessary; but to retreat in the face of an enemy equal, if not superior in numbers, and with impunity to cross from an Island to the main, was an arduous, if not impracticable undertaking. Stratagem accomplished it. Throughout the day, Sullivan exhibited every appearance of an intention to maintain his ground, and so soon as the night spread its shades, silently struck his tents, and before two in morning, the whole army had crossed over, unperceived by the enemy. The troops were stationed along the coast, between Tiverton and Providence.

The Marquis De La Fayette arrived about 12 at night from Boston, where he had gone to solicit the speedy return of the fleet. We have already adverted to the character of the Marquis. Nature had largely endowed him with that ardency of soul that delights in great enterprizes, and aspires to fame by splendid personal achievements. Rhode Island he had considered as a theatre on which he might display his courage, both under the eye of his countrymen, and that of a people whose idol his bewitching affability, as well as his martial ardour and his zeal in their cause, had rendered him. The unavoidable retreat of the French fleet had snatched the laurel from his grasp. He was now still more sensibly mortified at his absence from the field of action on the 29th. He had rode to Boston, a distance of 70 miles, in 7 hours; he returned in 6 hours and a half, just in time to have the charge of the rear-guard on the retreat.—In the approbation of Congress, of the Commander in Chief, and of the nation, Sullivan and his

Zeal of La  
Fayette.



CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

Harmony restored between the Americans and the French.

gallant comrades, found the reward due to genuine worth, even when fortune disappoints its primary objects.

To produce the failure of this expedition, a multitude of extraordinary and improbable circumstances, must evidently have concurred. When it was undertaken, its success appeared certain even to the least sanguine. Accordingly, the disappointment caused by its unfortunate issue was keenly felt, especially in the northern States, whose exertions to promote a happier result, had been ardent and substantial. The chagrin experienced on the occasion vented itself in ill timed and impolitic murmurs against the French Admiral, to whose retreat the whole evil was attributed. The Count, however, in the distressed state of his fleet, and tied down, as he was to the letter of his instructions, by the watchful jealousy of his officers, and by the nature of a service which admitted of no compromise with positive orders, and established rules, could scarcely have acted otherwise. Want of spirit could not be imputed to him ;\* nor could he be charged with an indisposition to promote the triumph of the common cause. Washington, Hancock, Heath, and other influential characters, saw all this ; they saw likewise the fatal effects threatened by mutual irritation. Their prudent and temperate measures, together with those of Congress and the council of Massachusetts, succeeded in speedily restoring harmony and cordiality between the French and the Americans ; and those accidental feuds and jealousies, which the enemies of the common cause, both internal and external, would have rejoiced to see converted into a serious rupture, happily vanished, after clouding for a moment the bright prospects which the alliance had opened.

Predatory expeditions of the British.

Sir Henry Clinton arrived in Rhode Island the day after it was evacuated. Disappointed in cutting off Sullivan's retreat, he steered back towards New York, and, on his way, planned an expedition against New London. Adverse winds opposed his design ; he, therefore, continued his route, leaving the fleet and the troops on board, under the command of Major General Gray, with orders to proceed eastwardly upon a similar expedition in Buzzards Bay. These orders were executed with promptitude and success. Entering Acushnet river, Gray burnt and destroyed all the ships he could reach—surrendered to the flames the Towns of Bedford and Fair Haven, a number of store-houses, and a Fort on the Eastern bank—carrying off the most valuable part of his booty, and destroying the rest. Thence he proceeded to Martha's Vineyard, where he repeated the same predatory warfare—sparing nothing, disarming the inhabitants, &c. with the speed of the freebooter, retiring

\* D'Estaing offered to lead his troops to Rhode-Island ; but of the fleet, in its present state, he could not dispose.

to New York with a welcome supply of ten thousand sheep and three hundred oxen. CHAP.  
XIII.

An expedition against Little Egg Harbour, on the East coast of New Jersey, was soon afterwards planned and executed with circumstances alone sufficient to shew that Britons no longer felt "the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war, that makes ambition virtue."\* To favour this expedition, and at the same time, to procure forage, it was judged expedient to put in motion the main British army. It advanced in two divisions. One of these, headed by Cornwallis, marched along the western bank of the Hudson, into the country of New Jersey, and took a position near Newbridge, on the Hackensack. The other, under Knyp- hausen, proceeded to a parallel situation, on the eastern side of the North river. Flat bottomed boats attended their movements, ready for an eventual junction, if the American army should threaten either column. General Washington, however, conjecturing the real object of this advance, contented himself with detaching several parties to cover the country, protecting at the same time the important passes on the Highlands with his usual solicitude.

Colonel Baylor, of Virginia, lately Aid-de-camp to General Washington, now commanded one of three regiments of light dragoons, raised upon the particular recommendation of the Commander in Chief, who duly appreciated the importance of Cavalry. His regiment had been stationed at Paramus; but Baylor, preferring a post where he could better observe the enemy, and procure the earliest intelligence of their movements, and not confined by his orders to his original post, had crossed the Hackensack, and taken quarters at Old Taapan, or Herring-Town, a small village not very distant from another called New Taapan, where a body of militia had been posted. Of this some disaffected inhabitants conveyed intelligence to Cornwallis; and a plan was immediately formed to cut off both Baylor's corps and the militia. The destruction of the first was committed to the sanguinary Gray: that of the second to Lieutenant Colonel Campbell, who, for that purpose, was detached from Knyphausen's division, with a considerable party. Delays in the execution of this part of the plan, and seasonable information of the impending blow, saved

1778

Surprise &  
massacre of  
Baylor's re-  
giment.

---

\* "It is not the least of our misfortunes that the strength and character of our army, are thus impaired. Familiarized with the horrid scenes of savage cruelty, it can no longer boast of the noble and generous principles which dignify a soldier. No longer you sympathize with the dignity of the royal banner, nor feel the pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war, that makes ambition virtue. What makes ambition virtue?—The sense of honour. But is this sense of honour consistent with the spirit of plunder or the practice of murder? can it flow from mercenary motives, or prompt to cruel deeds?"

*Earl of Chatham, in the House of Lords, November 20, 1777.*

CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

September  
28.September  
30.Pulaski's  
infantry is  
cut off.

the militia ; but Baylor and his dragoons were doomed to experience the merciless rage of an unsparing foe.

Guided by some of the country people, who possessed accurate local knowledge, the party under Gray, took a circuitous route, eluded the patrols, fell in the rear of a Sergeant's guard, stationed at a bridge over the Hackensack, and captured or killed the whole, without giving any alarm to the regiment. The surprise of the corps was then easily effected ; and thus far Gray is entitled to the praise of a bold, active, and able partizan ; but what followed has attached to his name, the indelible stigma of unnecessary and wanton barbarity. He had ordered his men to give no quarters, caused the charges to be drawn out of their firelocks, and the flints taken out, that they might be constrained to use their bayonets only. The regiment were asleep in a barn ; there the British rushed upon them—and, like infuriated assassins regardless of the honourable name and character of soldiers, regardless of the sacred rules of civilized war, which uphold, instead of excluding the tender claims of humanity, bayoneted all they fell in with\*—although the Americans, in their disarmed, unclad, defenceless condition called for quarter. Out of 104 privates, then present, sixty seven were killed, wounded and taken. Had Grey's orders been strictly executed, no prisoners would have been made ; but one of his Captains whose name ought to have been preserved, had the sublime courage to disobey them ; he gave quarter to the whole fourth troop, not a man of which was hurt, except two that happened to be on guard at the bridge. Among the prisoners, were Colonel Baylor and Major Clough, both wounded with the bayonet, the first dangerously, the second mortally. The avenging blow struck, three days after, at Donop's corps by Butler and Lee, in some degree, compensated for this mournful event. The expedition against Little Egg Harbour, which the joint movement of Cornwallis and Knyphausen had partly been made to promote, was completely successful. It wore the same character of depredation and violence as the ravages before spread on the banks of the Acushnet, and at Martha's Vineyard ; and evinced a disposition to change a war of conquest into a war of revenge. One of its most memorable features was the incidental surprise and barbarous treatment of Pulaski's infantry. That brave Pole, so ardent, so persevering in the cause of liberty, had, after resigning the command of the cavalry, solicited and obtained permission to form a le-

---

\* Congress directed an enquiry to be made into this horrid transaction. Depositions were taken accordingly, and published to the world. To relieve those feelings of indignation and disgust, which the aggravating circumstances of inhumanity attendant on that *surprise*, excite in our breast, we turn from the odious *subject*, but refer the reader to the *Remembrancer*, for 1778.



CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

Oct. 18.

D'Estaing  
sails for the  
West Indies

November 3

Dispositions  
of the Bri-  
tish and the  
Americans  
for the  
winter:

gionary corps of horse, to which some infantry was attached. He now lay within eight or ten miles from the coast. His position was betrayed to the enemy by a British deserter, who had been admitted into the legion, as an officer, and whom some unknown cause, at this time, induced to return to his countrymen. With rapidity and success, a complete surprise of the Count's infantry was effected; but on this occasion also, no quarter was given; and again relentless fury stained the laurels of the victor.\*

Byron had arrived at New-York, about the middle of September. After refitting his squadron, he sailed in quest of D'Estaing. Another tremendous storm drove him from the Bay of Boston, and considerably injured his ships. To repair them, he found it necessary to steer for Newport. Seizing this favourable moment, D'Estaing put out to sea, and directed his course to the West-Indies, where his government had instructed him to act during the winter. On the same day, a detachment of 5,000 troops commanded by Gen. Grant, sailed from Sandy-Hook for the West-Indies also, under the escort of Commodore Hotham, with six ships of war. Towards the close of November, another embarkation took place at New-York, for the State of Georgia, whose climate would admit of active operations during the approaching winter. It was considered by the British Commander in Chief as the weakest part of the Union; and he had arranged a plan for its reduction as soon as the French fleet should, by its departure, leave the American coast unprotected. The 3,000 troops detached for this service were commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, and the naval force by Commodore Hyde Parker. Lord Howe had sailed for Europe; and Admiral Gambier assumed his command. The season of activity had now elapsed, and notwithstanding the detachments just mentioned, there still remained in New-York a force adequate to its effectual protection. The American army, therefore, retired into Winter-Quarters—the main body was stationed on both sides of the Hudson, about West-Point and Middlebrook—the light troops nearer the lines—and with a view to recruit the horses, the cavalry extended into the interior country. Again the troops passed the winter in huts—but the distresses of Valley-Forge recurred not—large supplies of clothing lately obtained from France—substantial improvements in the Quarter-Master and Medical departments—and, above all, active and incessant attention on the part of the Commander in Chief to the comfort of his beloved troops, obviated the return

\* Stedman tells us that the British, in this affair were highly irritated by intelligence that Pulaski had determined to give no quarter, and that this intelligence afterwards proved to be false. In this way he excuses this butchery. Can he be serious?

**CHAP.** of those mournful scenes which, at the commencement of  
**XIII.** the preceding winter, had exhibited the defenders of their  
 country in a condition which threatened more than once  
 the total dissolution of the army, and to which none but  
 such men, armed in such a cause, could have been recon-  
 ciled.

1778

Before France took a decided share in the war, La Fayette entirely devoted himself to the service of America; a sense of duty, as well as patriotic attachments, now made him desirous of fighting the battles of his King and his native country, in whatever place his government might direct. He cherished a hope that circumstances would second his wishes, and bring him back to serve the common cause, among those whose friendship he had obtained, and for whose welfare he continued to feel the most anxious solicitude. As soon as the campaign was closed, he intimated his desire to Congress, not with a view entirely to dissolve his military connexion with America, but soliciting only a furlough. On this occasion, esteem, gratitude, and affection for the captivating young foreigner, were conspicuously manifested by the Commander in Chief, the Congress, the army, and the people. He obtained unlimited leave of absence—and the most flattering resolutions were passed by the Congress, to express to him and to the world, their high sense of his merit and services. He sailed from Boston in the Continental frigate the *Alliance*, on the 6th of January, 1779.

Such were the principal transactions on the sea-coast of America, in the course of the present year. In the West, Indian ferocity, and civil discord, had given to the war a still more barbarous aspect—and the fierce and bloody contest still continued to rage. But we delay the mournful narrative—and, for a moment repose our eyes, fatigued with scenes of slaughter, conflagration, and rapine, on the Legislative proceedings of Virginia, during the year 1778.

Meeting of  
the Legislature.

The General Assembly met according to adjournment on the 4th of May.\* This Session was short, and chiefly devoted to the adjustment of local and personal matters. Yet, some of the acts then passed may well arrest the attention of the historian. Among these, we remark one which has been charged with infringing† the eighth article of the bill of rights, declaring that in all capital or criminal cases, a man is entitled, among other rights “to trial by an impartial jury of his vicinity, without whose consent

May 4.

---

\* Such was the dilatoriness of some Members that the House could not proceed to business until the 12th, when Benjamin Harrison was elected Speaker. The 27th of May was fixed upon to hear the excuses of absent Members, and censure those who had neglected their duty.

† See Tucker's *Blackstone*, Appendix 292. See also *Debates of Virginia Convention*, in 1788, page 77 and 144.

he cannot be found guilty. The act to which we allude is a bill of attainder. It was passed on the following occasion : CHAP. XIII.

1778

Josiah Phillips attainted.

A certain Josiah, Philips, labourer, of the Parish of Lynhaven, in the county of Princess Anne, a man of daring and ferocious disposition, associating with other individuals of a similar cast; spread terror and desolation through the lower country, committing murders, burning houses, wasting farms, and perpetrating other enormities, at the bare mention of which humanity shudders. Every effort to apprehend him had proved abortive. Strong in the number of his ruffian confederates, or, where force would probably fail, resorting to stratagem and ambush, striking the deadly blow, or applying the fatal torch at the midnight hour, and in those places which their insulated situation left almost unprotected, he retired with impunity to his secret haunts, reeking with blood, and loaded with plunder. The inhabitants of the counties which were the theatre of his crimes, never secure a moment by day or by night, in their fields or their beds, sent representations of their distresses to the Governor, claiming the public protection. He consulted with some members of the Legislature then sitting, on the best method of proceeding against this atrocious offender. Too powerful to be arrested by the sheriff and his *posse comitatus*, it was not doubted that an armed force might be sent to hunt and destroy him and his accomplices, in their morasses and fastnesses, wherever found ; but the proceeding concluded to be most consonant with the forms and principles of our government, was, to pass, during the present Session, an act giving him a reasonable, but limited day to surrender himself to justice, and to submit to a trial by his Peers, according to the laws of the land ; to consider a refusal as a confession of guilt, and divesting him, as an outlaw of the character of citizen, to pass on him the sentence prescribed by these laws, and the public officer being defied, to make every one his deputy, especially those whose safety hourly depended on the destruction of the daring ruffian. The case was laid before the Legislature. The proofs were ample : his outrages no less notorious than those of the public enemy, and well known to the members of both houses from the lower countries. No one pretended then that the perpetrator of crimes, who could successfully resist the officers of justice, should be protected in the continuance of them by the privileges of his citizenship ; and that, when he baffled ordinary process, nothing extraordinary could be rightfully adopted to protect the citizens against him. No one doubted that society has a right to erase from the roll of its members any one who renders his own existence inconsistent with theirs—to withdraw from him the protection of their



CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

laws, and to remove him from among them by exile, or even by death, if necessary. An enemy in lawful war putting to death, in cold blood, the prisoner he has taken, authorizes retaliation which would be inflicted with peculiar justice, on the individual guilty of the deed, were it to happen that he should be taken. And could the murders and robbery of a pirate or outlaw entitle him to more tenderness? The Legislature passed the law therefore, and without opposition. Philips did not come in before the day prescribed, continued his lawless outrages, was afterwards taken in arms, but delivered over to the ordinary justice of the country. The Attorney General for the Commonwealth, the immediate agent of the government, waiving all appeal to the act of attainder, indicted him at the common law, as a murderer and robber. He was arraigned on that indictment in the usual forms, before a jury of his vicinage, and no use whatever made of the act of attainder, in any part of the proceedings. He pleaded that he was a British subject, authorized to bear arms by a commission from Lord Dunmore, that he was, therefore, a mere prisoner of war, and under the protection of the law of nations. The court being of opinion that a Commission from an enemy could not protect a citizen in deeds of murder and robbery, overruled his plea; he was found guilty by his jury, sentenced by the court, and executed by the ordinary officer of justice—and all “according to the forms and rules of the Common law.”

During the encampment at Valley Forge, General Washington had, as already noticed, anxiously urged reinforcements from the different States. Such men as had been either recruited or draughted, in Virginia, for the Continental army, were early marched to Pennsylvania. The General Assembly, sensible of the importance of strenuous exertions for the approaching campaign, passed an act for immediately raising a brigade of Volunteers and a regiment of horse, offering encouragements uncommonly liberal. Their patriotic views, however, could not be realized. It was then that General Nelson, who had been appointed to command the contemplated brigade of Volunteers, disdaining inglorious inactivity, raised, by his individual exertions, the troop of horse which we have before mentioned, and upon which a considerable share of legislative and executive aid was ultimately bestowed. Voluntary enlistments were again introduced, instead of draughts, and such advantages attached to military service as appeared best calculated to entice those whom patriotism could not stimulate; and speedily to complete the required quota. So great was the ardour of some members for the public service, and such their conviction that the country wanted chiefly soldiers, that the following resolution was proposed:

“To testify our attachment to liberty—that the Good People of the Commonwealth may be roused and inflamed by example—and to give speedy and certain success to the two acts of General Assembly, passed this present Session, viz: for raising a regiment of horse, and a brigade of foot to join the grand army.

CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

*Resolved.* That, on the return of the members of the house, one Delegate from each county pledges his honour to enter into the regiment of horse, or the brigade of foot aforesaid, whichever he may prefer; except in the following cases, viz: where such a Delegate exceeds 50 years of age, has a son or sons in the army, or is disabled by bodily infirmity. And to ascertain which of the two members in each county shall be the person, when neither of them comes within the foregoing exemptions, that it shall be decided by fair and equal lot; and where it so happens that one of the members of this House is exempted by this resolution and the other not, the one being able shall enter into the service, as aforesaid.”

This public spirited resolution was not adopted; but it indicated what could be done, should the situation of the country become so perilous as to require even Legislators to buckle on their armour.

An act was passed for raising an additional battalion of infantry, to garrison the fortifications and batteries erected for the defence of the State. The individuals enlisted for this service were not to be marched out of the commonwealth.

The number of criminals, at this time, confined in the public jail, was so considerable as to require a law authorizing the Judges of the General court to hold two additional Sessions.

Other measures.

The extraordinary powers of the Governor and Council were continued, and a Clerkship of foreign correspondence established.—P. Henry was re-elected Governor—and the Treasurer authorized to issue small Treasury-notes to an amount sufficient to carry into effect the different military acts passed at the present Session—and to pay to the unfortunate sufferers in the conflagration of Norfolk the respective compensations which it had been finally agreed to allow them.

This emission, and another directed by the Legislature at their subsequent Session, to the amount of one million, seven hundred thousand dollars, were justified by absolute necessity. The supplies of money obtained by loans, and by the system of taxation lately adopted, were inadequate to the increasing exigencies of the State. In this point of view, therefore, they were beneficial. Without them, the contest could not be maintained. But whilst the national interest was thus promoted, much individual evil was produced. Besides a superabun-

Depreciation and its effects.

CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

dance of this circulating medium. many causes contributed to depreciate its value. Universal confidence no longer supported its credit—that it should finally sink or be redeemed below par, was now the prevalent opinion—the facility of counterfeiting these bills, tempting many unprincipled individuals, added considerably to the mass of this artificial wealth—and to the public distrust. Good, as well as forged paper, was, from this single cause, undervalued. When once the general confidence was thus shaken, every one became desirous of converting what he considered as little better than imaginary wealth, into more substantial possessions. The price of solid transferable property, however extravagant, was not regarded. A spirit of commerce and speculation, seemed, all at once, breathed into every class of society. Sanguine, uninformed, or greedy individuals, deluded by the fallacious sound of high nominal prices, sold their hereditary estates for sums, which, after the lapse of a few days, could not have repurchased one half of them. But a much greater evil arose from the paper currency having been made a legal tender for the payment of debts. At the beginning of the contest an unusual scarcity of money had been considered as a sufficient reason for suspending all judiciary proceedings at the suit of creditors. Such among the latter as were not disaffected to the American cause, acquiesced in the measure, distressing as it was, with patriotic cheerfulness, from a reflection that the triumph of liberty required the hardship. Before this suspension was removed, and the ordinary course of justice restored, the late scarcity was converted into an absolute redundancy of the circulating medium; and it became no less injurious to creditors to receive their debts in paper money, than it had been difficult for debtors to pay them in specie. Under such circumstances, it would seem that the Legislature, whose duty it was equally to protect the property of every citizen, ought to have extended to creditors that solicitous interference, which had, in a contrary state of things, been exerted in favour of debtors. This justice evidently required, for it is the very essence of justice, that in all contracts an equivalent should be given for what is received; the currency was debased,\* no matter how or why; to make

\* Depreciation was no longer concealed—The talisman of enthusiasm was broken—And, as Dr Ramsay says, “the country was in the condition of a town on fire, when some houses must be blown up, to save the remainder.”

The allowances fixed by the Legislature of Virginia, in 1778, were as follows:

At the Spring Session.	
To Members of Assembly	20 s. per day.
To Clerk for Foreign correspondence	1200 per annum.
At the Fall Session.	
To Congressional Delegates,	\$ 5 per day, in addition to the \$ 10, before allowed,
To Governor,	13,000 per annum.



a debt due in specie, payable in this debased currency, was a flagrant oppression on a large class of society. Had the operation of the tender law been confined to contracts made after its date, much of this evil would have been avoided. But that measure was thought inconsistent with the legal equality between the different kinds of money which was supposed necessary to preserve public credit. In effect, a clause of that nature would have implied latent distrust; and when the tender law was passed, redemption at par was certainly intended. The necessity of some remedy was now plainly seen; but it was difficult to determine on the substance, the mode, and the date of that remedy. Creditors, then, were abandoned to the mercy and consciences of men, few of whom could resist the allurements of private interest, especially when supported by the law of the land. Hence fraud and avarice were often seen to trample on the fair claims of defenceless probity. Hence numerous and mournful instances of absolute ruin brought on the distressed widow, and the helpless orphan, as well as on unsuspecting, generous, indulgent lenders. Opulent debtors were, in many cases, known to obtrude a shilling in the pound upon their beggared creditors. Females, that interesting portion of society, peculiarly entitled to the protection of the laws, were severely injured, as legacies in their favour generally consisted of money.—The tender-law poured into the social body a slow and corroding poison, which undermined its moral health.—Some of the sufferers patiently submitted to their losses—faithful to their oath to sacrifice life and fortune at the shrine of liberty—but others, less magnanimous, lost all affection for a cause which they had before enthusiastically cherished.—Galled by present personal injury, they ceased to keep in view future general benefit.—The effect was scarcely less baneful on those who were favoured by the law—for in their hearts were mostly obliterated those noble principles which exalt and adorn the character of social man, spotless honour, and primeval faith. Those who had before regularly moved in the sober paths of virtuous industry, were now hastened into the vortex of extravagance and adventure, and insidious speculation. In short, were we, for a moment, to lose sight of the ample compensation, afforded by the glorious and happy result which paper-money contributed to obtain, nothing could reconcile us to a law which, besides the physical misery arising from its effects

---

To Members of Privy Council, *l.* 4,800 to be divided according to attendance.

To Treasurer, . . . . . *l.* 2,000 per annum.

To Attorney General, . . . . . *l.* 300.

To Judges of Chancery }  
General Court. } *l.* 800 each per annum.

To Aud'ts. of Public accounts *l.* 1,000 each, &c. &c.

CHAP.  
XIII

1778

in many cases, had so strong a tendency to demoralize a whole nation.—During the present year, however, depreciation did not reach its acme: it fluctuated from four to six for one.\*

The avarice of monopolizers, and speculators of every description, was another abundant source of public and private injury. The Northern and the middle States having hitherto been the seat of the war, felt, from co-operating causes, the evils of depreciation in a greater degree than the Southern. Hence, adventurers from those States, knowing that the present circulating medium was of more value to the Southward, flocked in crowds to those places where they could exchange Continental and State Bills to the best advantage. Actuated by a similar spirit of lucre, individuals from Virginia sought Northern markets, where they could obtain higher prices, taking care to realize the paper they received as promptly as possible. By the concurring operation of these, and other circumstances, among which we remark the embarrassments and languor of agriculture during this period, a scarcity was created, partly natural, partly artificial.—The Legislature, at their autumnal session, sedulously employed themselves in devising efficacious remedies against these hourly growing evils. The penalties annexed to monopoly, and to other practices of a similar tendency, were greatly increased. Distillation of spirits from corn, wheat, rye, and other grain, was, for a limited time, severely prohibited.—The Governor was again authorized to lay an embargo upon provisi-

Further  
proceedings  
of the Le-  
gisla-  
ture.  
October 5.

---

\* Landlords were among the most prominent victims of the tender-law. —We have at this moment, before our eyes, a letter from a Gentleman, conspicuous for his abilities and patriotism, to a friend in the Legislature, on this subject. It says "I am informed that Colonel B—— intends to propose a bill this Session for the relief of Landlords. I should suppose that the wisdom and justice of the Legislature can and will devise some remedy for the relief of this class of people among us. I am one who have the misfortune to see myself and family nearly ruined by the retrospective effect of our law. Almost the whole of my landed estate was rented out some years before this war, for low cash rents, and under the faith of existing laws which secured me specie for my rents. The vast sums of paper-money that have been issued, and (this being now a tender for the discharge of rents) the consequent depreciation, have well nigh effected an entire transfer of my estate to my tenants. This year, sir, the rents of 4,000 acres of fine land will not buy me 20 barrels of corn! I am very far from desiring that the law should place these contracts literally as they were, but substantially so.—It is just that they should be. When the tenant agreed to pay me £6 for 100 acres rent, he could not sell his tobacco for more than 16 or 18 shill's. a hundred. Now he sells his tobacco for £10 and 12 per cent.—It does not appear to me that the public good can be concerned in thus transferring the property of Landlords to their tenants. But public justice demands that the true meaning and genuine spirit of contracts should be complied with. It appears to me that an act of commutation might set the business right by directing the payment in produce, at the prevailing price of such produce, when the contracts were made—leaving this to be settled by the courts annually, as they formerly did in the case of exchange. I well know your love of justice to be such that your approbation will be given to any proper plan for reconciling public benefit with private justice."

ons, and other articles of primary necessity, among which salt was, of course, enumerated. More rigorous measures were adopted to prevent individuals from purchasing or keeping of this last article, more than their own domestic consumption required: and, as a French fleet might eventually appear in the waters of the Commonwealth, and stand in need of various supplies, authority was given to the Executive, speedily to relieve its probable wants. The salaries of most public agents were augmented; the officers and soldiers from the Commonwealth presented with six months pay; their privilege of purchasing, at moderate prices, from the public stores considerably enlarged; and half the pay of such among them as were married, and should die in the service, ensured to their widows. The Governmental trade of Virginia, managed by her Executive, tho' in many respects, objectionable, was immensely beneficial to the army, in whose favour it had been originally established. But these were only feeble and temporary alleviations: endeavours were made to strike at the root of the evil by extending the system of taxation, entered upon the preceding year, by a further domestic loan in aid of the emissions already mentioned; and by negotiations for foreign loans, on account of the Commonwealth, in France and Tuscany. These negotiations, however, proved fruitless, and, in common with her sister State, Virginia had long to struggle with increasing financial embarrassments. The incalculable injury resulting from counterfeited bills, became a serious object of Legislative concern: forgery was declared felony without benefit of clergy, and of course, made punishable with death.

The establishment of a standing board of Auditors of public accounts, to consist of three persons, must be referred to this Session.—Although the share lately taken in the war by France, promised to accelerate the accomplishment of the great objects for which America had entered the lists, still the guardians of the State did not permit themselves to be lulled, by the syren voice of hope, into a fatal inactivity. Strenuous preparations for the ensuing campaign had been recommended by the Congress, and the Commander in Chief: the Legislature of Virginia, participating in their solicitude, directed two thousand two hundred and sixteen men to be immediately raised, offering a bounty of three hundred dollars\* to such men as would enlist for 18 months, and of four hundred dollars to those engaging to serve during the war—with the continental bounty of lands, and other eventual advantages to themselves if disabled, or to their families, if slain.—It was, at the same time enacted that the several counties within the

---

\* The depreciation about 6 for 1.



CHAP.  
XIII.

1778

Commonwealth, and the city of Williamsburg, should each of them furnish, on or before the 1st of May, 1779. one twenty fifth man of their militia respectively.—Independently of this levy, such counties as had failed to furnish their quota of men as directed by Legislative authority, in 1777, were strictly enjoined to make good their respective deficiencies.—From the operation of this act one county only was exempted: it was that of *Illinois*, lately added to the territory of Virginia, by a bold and successful expedition, of a body of militia, under Colonel George Rogers Clarke, on the western side of the Ohio, and near the banks of the Mississippi. Clarke's valorous achievements, and extensive conquest constitute an important epoch in the History of Virginia, and will soon be related.

Among the acts of this Session of General Assembly, two more ought to be mentioned—the one establishes a Court of Appeals and the other forbids the further importation of slaves into the Commonwealth—"declaring that no slave shall hereafter be brought into Virginia by land or by water; and that every slave imported contrary thereto, shall, upon such importation, be free; excepting such slaves as might belong to persons emigrating from the other States, or be claimed by discount, devise or marriage, or be at that time the actual property of any citizen of this Commonwealth residing in any other of the United States; or belong to travellers making a transient stay and carrying their slaves away with them."

The bare mention of slaves suggests to the mind a melancholy, hideous contrast, and a thousand awful considerations, inseparable from it. These, no doubt, occurred to men who called liberty the first, the best gift of God, and who represented a nation armed in its defence. Unable to extirpate a great, a tremendous evil, they, at last removed its principal cause. They commenced a noble work. May the wisdom and beneficence of their successors, aided by approving Heaven, pursue its desirable completion; and eradicate from this otherwise happy land, a plant of monstrous origin, alarming growth, and bitter fruit!

## CHAPTER XIV.

---

Captain Willing's expedition against Natchez—Indian ravages—Ruin of Wyoming—Achievements of Colonel George R. Clarke—He takes Kaskaskias—Organization of the county of Illinois—Threats and preparations of Governor Hamilton—Clarke takes Fort St. Vincens—Governor Hamilton is sent to Williamsburg—Designs of Congress against Detroit—The troops of Convention are sent to Virginia—Reach Charlottesville—Their comfortable situation at that place—New plan of the British—Invasion and reduction of Georgia—General Lincoln takes the command of the Southern army—The British are driven from Port Royal Island—Ashe is defeated—Prevost marches to Charleston—Retreats—Invasion of Virginia by General Mathew—Fort Nelson is evacuated—Burning of Suffolk—Legislative proceedings relative to the invasion—Board of trade and Board of war established—Property of British subjects ordered to be sold—Resolution against the claims of the Indiana company—Financial provisions—The tender-law is repealed—Act for removing the Seat of Government—Act declaring who shall be deemed citizens—Report of the Committee of Revisors—P. Henry resigns the office of Governor—Thomas Jefferson is elected in his place.

Some links are still to be added to the chain of events, in 1778.

CHAP.  
XIV.

---

1778

In the month of February, an expedition took place, remarkable for its boldness, though not extensive in its effects. Captain James Willing, in the service of the United States, suddenly appeared at the Natchez, a British settlement in West Florida. He had left Fort Pitt with a handful of daring comrades, who, upon reaching the point of destination, were sent out in small parties, and made the inhabitants prisoners on parole. The result was an agreement, stipulating the most perfect neutrality on their part, and security for their persons and property, on that of the United States. The principal advantage of this expedition was to deprive the hostile Indians of those warlike supplies which they before drew from the Natchez, and fatally used against the American settlers in the South West.

February 19.  
Capt. Willing's expedition against Natchez.

The savage foresters could not be induced to remain

CHAP. inactive spectators of the contest. Early accustomed to  
 XIV. rapine, exulting in destruction and blood, their inculcated  
 ferocity, and their hereditary resentments against the  
 whites in general, were sufficient to hurry them into hos-

1778

Indian ravages.

ilities. They were, besides, stimulated by the corrupting liberality and insidious promises of British emissaries, and by the misrepresentations of disaffected Americans, who, seeking a refuge among them, endeavoured to infuse into their hearts the rancorous and vindictive passions of their own. The North-Western frontier suffered extremely from their ruthless incursions. In these they were generally headed by Colonel John Butler, a Connecticut Tory, and one Brandt, a half-Indian by blood. The human character is seldom exhibited in so hideous a shape of moral depravity, as in those two monsters. To annoy, distress and torment was their incessant occupation, their chief, indeed, their sole pleasure. The vast extent, and exposed state of the North-Western borders, the insulated situation of most settlements, the accurate knowledge of the country possessed by the disaffected who had associated the Indians to their plans of vengeance, enabled even small marauding parties to do considerable mischief—like beasts of prey, they unexpectedly fell upon their intended and defenceless victims—and, after glutting with blood their ferocious appetites, and inflicting all the misery in their power, they retired, unpursued and unpunished, to their remote and wild fastnesses. One of the most deplorable instances of Indian barbarity, was the desolation of Wyoming, about the middle of the summer.

Ruin of Wyoming.

July.

Wyoming, a rich, populous, flourishing settlement, on the Eastern branch of the Susquehannah, presented a scene of human felicity which would be deemed ideal, if the testimonies of Historians and travellers did not concur in establishing its reality. The infant establishment was blessed with a genial climate, a fertile soil; and, what is still more precious, with the virtues of the patriarchal ages.—Simplicity and innocency of manners—primeval faith—cheerful industry—cordial hospitality—smiling content, seemed to have marked this happy spot for their own. Unfortunately, civil discord came—and, with it, a train of clashing interests, views, and passions, destructive of the enchanting scene. Political rancour extinguished natural affection; it dissolved the closest, the most sacred ties—and, as is usual in such cases, the fierceness of present hatred raged in proportion to the tenderness of former love. The friends of liberty, however, more numerous than their opponents, at first overcame them—and doomed their leaders to exile and loss of property. The Colonel John Butler, already mentioned, rallied them round his banners. Thirsting after revenge, these desperate fugitives soon and easily caught the murderous phrenzy of his impla-



1778

able bosom. The situation of the settlement was but too favourable to his views. Nearly one thousand inhabitants had joined the continental army; this was an alarming subduction from the inherent force of Wyoming; yet, the settlers could scarcely hope for any other protection than that derived from themselves. A collision of contradictory claims between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, respecting this territory and remoteness from the military force of either of those States, left them entirely to their own resources and courage. Thus situated, and warned of approaching danger, by several gloomy indications, they retired for security into their Forts.

The long-dreaded storm burst on Wyoming, on the first of July. A body of men, sixteen hundred strong, and composed of Indians, and Tories painted like Indians, under the command of Colonel John Butler, broke into the settlement.—One of the Forts surrendered without opposition—it was, of itself, weak—and chiefly garrisoned by concealed Tories. Another Fort was taken. Two stronger Forts, Kingston and Wilkesbarre, had been erected, near each other, on opposite sides of the Susquehanna. Into the first of these, Colonel Zebulon Butler, who commanded the Wyoming Militia, had retired with part of the armed force, and a multitude of women and children. On the 3d of July, he was summoned to surrender—his determination to make an honourable resistance, was signified. Upon being summoned a second time, however, with threats, that unless immediately surrendered, the Fort should be stormed, plundered, and burnt with all its contents, Zebulon Butler proposed a parley—this was acceded to—and a place appointed for the contemplated interview.—Thither the patriot Butler repaired, followed by the whole garrison, a few invalids excepted. No person appeared on the part of the enemy—but at some distance, a flag was seen waving—and receded, as the Americans moved towards it—they still advanced, and suddenly found themselves surrounded by an insidious foe, who started up, and from all sides poured upon them a tremendous fire. The disproportion of numbers was great—in the ratio of one to four—yet, the patriots displayed such firmness and intrepidity—they returned the hostile discharge with such quickness, that the enemy began to give way, when a soldier, either from treachery or cowardice, cried out “the Colonel has ordered a retreat!” A disorderly and precipitate flight was the consequence. The enemy furiously pursued the fugitives, who endeavoured to pass the river, and seek the protection of Fort Wilkesbarre. Vain efforts! Of 417, who had come out of the Fort, 360 were inhumanly butchered. The suppliant voice of a vanquished and disarmed opponent was not heard. The savage conqueror gave no quarter. The few who escaped were,

July 3

CHAP.  
XIV.

most of them, dangerously wounded. Fort Kingston was invested—and to strike terror into the feeble remains of the garrison, the green and bleeding scalps of the slain were sent in for their inspection.

1778

July 4.

Colonel Zebulon Butler, yielding to the alarms of his family, and still hoping to obtain some reinforcements, attended his wife and children down the river, and the command devolved on Colonel Dennison. The latter enquired under the protection of a flag, what terms would be granted to the garrison, upon surrendering the Fort? “THE HATCHET,” answered the brutalized, atrocious Chief—more execrable than the ruffian band under him—“THE HATCHET!”

A continual fire was poured on the Fort—the besieged weakened, exhausted, surrendered *at discretion*. They still retained some faint hope—Was there no latent spark of humanity? No soothing recollection of common country—of endearing ties, once so sweet and so sacred? No calculation, too, of the vicissitudes incident to war? No fear of retaliation, so awfully provoked? No!—The tutored savage was inflexible in his hellish resolve. He selected a few of the prisoners, reserving them for the horrid rites of Indian torture—enclosed the rest in the houses, with the mass of the people, sparing not the helpless sex, tender infancy, venerable old age. To these houses he applied the fatal torch, and the whole was consumed—a mournful holocaust to the grim demon of vengeance!

Fort Wilkesbarre quickly fell—in expectation of mercy for the trembling, imploring multitude with them, the Garrison offered no resistance. They understood not the relentless Butler. Seventy of the men, who had enlisted for the Continental service, were lacerated, mangled, butchered. The rest, men, women and children, perished in the flames!

Why cannot History throw an impenetrable veil over these heart-freezing horrors? Why cannot truth conceal, for the honour of humanity, particular acts of a still deeper dye?—Children were seen to imbrue their hands in the blood of their parents—brothers to murder their brothers or sisters—American officers experienced those prolonged, inhuman tortures which the ingenious cruelty of the Indians has devised. Splinters of resinous wood were stuck in their flesh. A slow fire.....Language cannot paint these horrors; from the terrified imagination, let them catch their proper hue!

The merciless ravagers did not leave Wyoming before they had converted it into a frightful waste—destroying or carrying away the cattle—levelling the houses and other improvements, with the ground—cutting down the smiling orchards and ripening crops—in short, imprinting

on every object, monumental and lasting vestiges of a vandalism, for which even the execration of ages must be inadequate punishment.—The farms of the Tories alone remained uninjured—heightening, by a striking contrast, the desolation around—like green spots in a Lybian desert. The few surviving members of the unhappy families involved in this vast scene of desolation, could scarcely thank Heaven for their escape. Wondering through trackless forests, women and children had to endure the extremities of hunger and fatigue, before they reached places of security; and no hospitable care, no friendly attention, could ever efface from their minds the memory of the past; moral distress, seldom included in any estimate of the calamities of war, though generally the chief portion of its evils, fell severely to their lot.

A body of Continental troops was detached against those ruthless invaders, but too late. This circumstance, however, enabled Colonel Wm. Butler, of the Pennsylvania troops, to attack and destroy several Indian settlements. Some weeks after his return, another storm of Indian and Tory vengeance burst upon a settlement, within the State of New-York, known by the name of Cherry-Valley, where the tragic scenes so fatal to Wyoming, were repeated.—The extent of the Frontier, on that side, rendered a complete and effectual system of defence impracticable.

In this fearful crisis, it was fortunate for Virginia to possess, on her Western borders, one of those rare individuals whom nature has endowed with equal energy of body and mind; with genius to plan, and activity to execute. Colonel George Rogers Clarke saved her back settlements from Indian fury. He did more. He planted her standard far beyond the banks of the Ohio, and added profitable conquests to the glory of chastising a cruel and insolent foe, and of ensuring tranquility to a whole frontier.

Atchieve-  
ments of Col  
G R Clarke.

Previous apprehensions and judicious views had induced the Legislature to place under his command a portion of the public force. It was well known that the Governor of the settlements planted by the Canadians on the Upper Mississippi, in the Illinois country, was an indefatigable agent of British ambition, and British cruelty; paying largely for the scalps of Americans; and, by every possible method, stimulating the neighbouring Indians to annoy and ravage the frontier. To strike an unexpected and decisive blow at this mischievous enemy, had long been a favourite scheme with Colonel Clarke. The petty warfare which he had hitherto waged, satisfied neither his patriotism, nor his commendable love of fame. Even on the present occasion, he could obtain a small force only, between two and three hundred men. But, like himself, these few patriots were inured to fatigue, regardless of danger, and panting after their country's applause. No



CHAP.  
XIV.

1778

Organizati-  
of the coun-  
ty of Illinois.

difficulty could damp their ardour. Descending the Monongahela, and the Ohio, down the Great Falls of the latter; they there hid their boats, and shaped their course Northwardly. Their provisions, which they carried on their backs, were soon consumed; for two days, they subsisted on roots, and, in a state of famine, reached the Town of Kaskaskias, on the banks of the Mississippi.—Hitherto fortune had smiled on their enterprize; no detachment of savage warriors, no straggling forester had discovered their approach. This success heightened their hopes, stimulated their courage. The Town and Fort might have resisted a much larger band of assailants; but Clarke and his adventurous companions advanced into Kaskaskias, unseen and unheard. The midnight hour favoured their design. They found the inhabitants reposing in the lap of that security, which the idea of vast distance from the American settlements was calculated to create. The Town and the Forts were taken in silence, and without opposition. The surprize was so judiciously conducted, and so completely effected, that not a single person escaped to spread the alarm through the neighbouring settlements. Clarke, seizing the golden moment, immediately mounted a detachment of his men on horses found at Kaskaskias; and three other Towns, further up the Mississippi, were reduced with equal success. Rocheblave, the obnoxious Governor, was sent to Virginia, with the written instructions which had been forwarded to him from Quebec, Detroit, and Michillimackinack, for exciting the Indians, and paying to them the price of blood. The settlers readily transferred their allegiance, and, as this Territory belonged to Virginia by charter and conquest, the General Assembly, at their autumnal Session, created it into a distinct county, to be called the county of Illinois. A temporary form of government was adapted to the circumstances of the people. To the Governor of the Commonwealth, the appointment of a county Lieutenant, and, through him, of all military agents, to act during pleasure, was attributed. The choice and support of the usual civil officers were left to the inhabitants. The Treasury of the State was to defray extraordinary expenses. In criminal cases, the county Lieutenant might grant a pardon, except in condemnations for murder and treason, when he could only suspend execution until the sense of the Governor, in the first instance, and that of the General Assembly, in the second, should be obtained. To supply the wants of the inhabitants and of the friendly Indians in the neighbourhood, a trade, on public account, was opened with New Orleans, and other places, but without precluding private commercial enterprize, the eventual deficiencies of which the public trade was only intended to cover. This new post, if properly protected and main-

tained, evidently promised to check the inroads and depredations of the Indians on the inhabitants of the Western Frontier of Virginia. Levies of infantry and cavalry were, therefore, directed to be speedily made, and to reinforce the brave and triumphant handful of Patriots, who had effected this important reduction, and whose services were so justly rewarded with the applause of their grateful country.\* The dilatoriness incident to military preparations, whose object was not immediately felt by the mass of the people, and lay at an immense distance from the seat of government, which, like the heart in the human body, often glows with a vivifying heat, whilst the extremities are cold and languid, prevented Col. Clarke from receiving, in its full extent, the contemplated aid. His genius and activity supplied this deficiency. They doubled his physical force. Insulated, as it were, in the heart of the Indian country; in the neighbourhood of the most warlike and ferocious tribes; in the track of many others, in the way of all, he knew how to maintain the power of his country, in this new acquisition; not only averting insult and injury, but carrying terror into the strongest holds, and most solitary recesses of those Indians, who, from time to time, sallied forth, like tigers, in quest of carnage, and effectually repressing all hostile attempts.

A tempest, however, was hanging over him, which perhaps, no efforts but his could have dispelled. The Governor of Detroit, Hamilton, a man no less remarkable for his boldness and activity, than for his barbarous disposition, and his tyrannical abuse of delegated power, formed the daring project of driving Clarke from his conquest. On the 15th of Dec. with a strong body of men, he took possession of Fort St. Vincent; repaired its ruined battlements, and converted it into a formidable repository of warlike implements of every description. His plan was to attack Kaskaskias in the Spring. This place he considered as an easy conquest. Two hundred Indians from Michillimachinac, and five hundred Cherokees and Chickasaws, were then to join his banner. With this body, he intended to penetrate up the Ohio, to Fort Pitt; the devastation of Kentucky was a branch of his extensive scheme of ruin.

Threats and  
preparations  
of Gov.  
Hamilton.

Dec. 15.

\* *In the House of Delegates, Nov. 23, 1778.*

"Whereas, authentic information has been received that Lieut. Col. George Rogers Clarke, with a body of Virginia militia, has reduced the British posts in the Western part of this Commonwealth, on the river Mississippi, and its branches, whereby great advantages may accrue to the common cause of America, as well as this Commonwealth in particular,"

"Resolved, That the thanks of this House are justly due to the said Col. Clarke, and the brave officers and men under his command, for their extraordinary resolution and perseverance in so hazardous an enterprise, and for the important services which they have thereby rendered their country."

CHAP.  
XIV.

1778

He proposed to sweep its principal settlements on his way. For this purpose he was supplied with light brass cannon, and, as in his advance, he expected to see his numbers swelled by hourly accessions of Indians, he proudly and confidently anticipated the subjugation and ruin of all West Augusta. In no resource connected with the success of his plan, was Hamilton deficient. The British Commander in Canada had furnished him with ample means. Destruction hovered on the Western borders of the Commonwealth. Clarke received no reinforcements. In his letter to Gov. Henry, written on the 29th of April, 1779, he says that, at the time of those formidable preparations, he had not heard from the Executive for nearly twelve months. The communication was difficult and uncertain. Already hostile detachments infested the neighbourhood of Kaskaskias, but they did not presume to attack. Under these circumstances, Clarke thought it prudent to concentrate his small force. Major Bowman was directed to evacuate the Fort at the Cohes, in order to strengthen the principal point of defence. When comparing his situation with that of the expected assailants, Clarke despaired of his ability to keep possession of the country. Still, he was resolved to maintain a siege, and preserve, at least, the post of Kaskaskias, or die in the attempt. To this end, he and his gallant associates were making active preparations; strengthening the fortifications of the place; erecting or demolishing, as necessity dictated. Whilst they were thus employed, a Spanish merchant, who had been at Fort Saint Vincent, arrived. He informed Col. Clarke that Hamilton had weakened himself by sending his Indians against the Frontiers, and up the Ohio. In the Fort, he had only retained eighteen men, three pieces of cannon, and a few mounted swivels. His intention was to attack Kaskaskias as soon as the season would permit, and he had no doubt of clearing the Western waters before the Autumn. This information was for the genius of Clarke, a flash of electric light. It discovered to him, not only safety, but new glory. He saw the whole by intuition—Hamilton must be attacked before he could collect his Indians—there was no other means of saving the country—with Clarke, to resolve and execute required but a moment. Immediately dispatching a small galley which he had fitted up, mounting two four pounders, and four swivels, with a company of men, and necessary stores on board, he directed the person whom he appointed to command her, to force his way up the Wabash, if possible, and station himself a few miles below the enemy—suffering nothing to pass—and awaiting further orders. In the mean time, garrisoning Kaskaskias with militia, embodying the inhabitants for the protection of the other Towns, and enlisting for the expedition several of their young men, who displayed the



CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

most promising ardour, he himself marched across the country, with one hundred and fifty gallant comrades, on whose devotion, inrepidity, and perseverance, he could well rely. Although his band was small and unincumbered with heavy baggage, such was the inclemency of the season, and such the difficulty of the route, that he slowly advanced, not without apprehensions of ultimate failure. When within three leagues\* of the enemy, it took this Spartan band five days to cross the drowned lands of the Wabash—having to wade, often upwards of two leagues, to their breast in water.† Had not, during this period of the expedition, the weather assumed and preserved a milder character, all these brave men must inevitably have perished. Heaven seemed to shield them. On the evening of the 23d, they reached the dry land, unperceived by the enemy, yet having themselves a sufficient view of the Fort. No time was to be wasted—no deliberation to precede the long meditated blow—at seven o'clock, the attack was made, before the enemy knew any thing of the assailants. The Town immediately surrendered with joy, and assisted in the siege of the Fort. For eighteen hours, a continual fire was kept up on both sides. Colonel Clarke‡ did not calculate on carrying the Fort before the arrival of his artillery. During the night, however, after the setting of the moon, he had an intrenchment thrown up, within rifle shot of the enemy's strongest battery, and, at morning, poured into their posts such a shower of well directed balls, that he silenced, in fifteen minutes, two pieces of cannon, without having one of his men killed or even wounded. As his numbers were small, he took every possible precaution to prevent a waste of lives. On the following day, Governor Hamilton demanded a parley;—and intimated an intention to surrender—difficulties arose—but in the evening, the terms of the surrender were arranged. The Governor and the garrison became prisoners of war, and considerable stores fell into the hands of the conqueror.

Feb. 23.

Clarke  
takes Fort  
St. Vincents

In the height of the attack upon the Fort, one of the Indian parties detached on all sides by Hamilton, returned. Ignorant of what had happened, the savages were marching into the Town with two prisoners. Clarke, up-

Feb. 24.

\* A league is about three miles.

† Justly has Mr John Randolph compared Clarke with Hannibal, and this wonderful advance with the passage of the Thrasimene marsh.

‡ These details were given by Colonel Clarke, himself, in a letter, dated April 29th, 1779, (Kaskaskias) and addressed to P. Henry, then Governor, but received by Thomas Jefferson, who was chosen Governor, on the 1st of June following.

CHAP.  
XIV.

on hearing of this, detached a party of his men to give them battle in the commons—nine Indians were taken—and the two prisoners released.

1779

Other circumstances, equally auspicious, crowned this wonderful success. A convoy of goods from Detroit was on its way to the post. Clarke informed of this, sent a party of sixty men, in armed boats, well mounted with swivels, to surprize and intercept the convoy. The plan was completely effected—forty prisoners, goods and provisions to the amount of 10,000*l*—the mail from Canada to Governor Hamilton, was brought to Colonel Clarke; and to add to the general joy, his express to the Governor, who was thought to have been killed, near the Falls of the Ohio, returned with very satisfactory letters from the Executive, and the thanks of the Assembly to this gallant little band, for the reduction of the country about Kaskaskias. This climax of fortunate circumstances, so singular that it seems to partake of the marvellous and the romantic, and might, if not well authenticated, excite doubt and even incredulity, so much elated the brave men under Clarke, that they would have attempted the reduction of Detroit, had he led them against that place. He was not disinclined to the measure; but the necessity of securing his prisoners, and the difficulty of raising a number of men, such as he then thought requisite for such an expedition, prevented him from indulging the ardour of his associates, and his own impulse. This he had soon cause to regret. He was informed that, upon receiving intelligence of his success at Fort St. Vincents, the people of Detroit, and of the circumjacent country, openly manifested their joy, during three whole days, by every method which social festivity could devise, and they so far counted upon Clarke's speedy arrival, that the merchants provided for him and his men those necessities and comforts which they imagined would be wanted. The haughty, capricious, tyrannical, and bloody disposition of the captive Governor, had alienated from him every virtuous and feeling heart. Most of the inhabitants too, were the descendants of French settlers; and the news of the alliance had just reached them. The garrison, amounting only to eighty men, could not oppose this burst of sentiment—but when Clarke received this intelligence, Detroit had been reinforced; the fair opportunity was no more.

Gov. Hamilton is sent to Williamsburg.

Most of the prisoners were discharged on parole. Hamilton and his principal officers were sent to Williamsburg. As the severe confinement to which the Executive of Virginia thought it just and expedient at first to subject these prisoners, involves an important point, that of retaliation, we will again, in the proper place, bring them into view.

Designs of Congress

The reduction of Detroit, and, indeed, of all the Northern British territory, had, sometime before, engaged the

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

against De-  
troit,

attention of Congress. That Body seems to have always contemplated the conquest of Canada, with peculiar solicitude. During the winter, a magnificent and extensive project against that province, was transmitted to General Washington. Part of that plan was the march of two separate columns of Continental troops from Pittsburg and Wyoming, against Detroit and Niagara. On other points American detachments were to press, whilst a French fleet and army should simultaneously attack the Eastern frontier of Canada. General La Fayette, and Dr. Franklin, now sole Minister Plenipotentiaries of the United States at the Court of Versailles, were to exert their influence at that Court, to obtain the desired co operation. Already D'Estaing had issued an address to the people of Canada, with a view to revive former attachments and sensibilities, in behalf of the common cause, against *a brave and powerful nation, which the allies hoped to vanquish.\** Washington again opposed the dictates of his unerring judgment and comprehensive mind to the dazzling views of sanguine projectors. The execution of the plan required such an immensity of resources—so extraordinary a coincidence of remote and improbable contingencies, that Congress, upon a careful and deliberate consideration of the whole, resolved to abandon an expedition, the chief object of which was to remove the cause of Indian hostilities, and their concomitant horrors. General M'Intosh, however, remained stationed at Pittsburg, collecting troops, and making other preparations against Detroit.

The British prisoners, known under the appellation of "Convention troops," were now in Virginia. The fate of these men deserve some details. By the Convention between Gates and Burgoyne, a free passage to England had been stipulated for the surrendering army, upon condition of not again serving in North America, during the present contest. This article left to Great Britain the advantage of employing those prisoners, either at home, or in any other part of the world, except North America. The troops, whose places they would supply, might act against the United States; nay, many of these men might, regardless of those engagements which bind only honourable soldiers, repair to New York, after embarkation. It was found impossible, at first, to procure satisfactory accommodations for the officers and soldiers at Boston. Burgoyne loudly complained, and declared that the *public faith of America was broken*. This declaration, combined with the frequent anterior assertions of some British Agents that "faith was not to be kept with rebels," alarmed the Congress. They

The troops  
of Conven-  
tion are  
marched to  
Vir-  
ginia.

\* This style was somewhat different from the *abusive* State papers of British Agents &c. It was a noble retaliation.



CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

Reach Char-  
lottesville.

expressed their fears ; permitted Burgoyne alone to embark, and detained the troops “ until an authentic ratification of the Convention at Saratoga should be obtained from the British Government.”—The Royal Commissioners, in the course of their fruitless negotiation, offered to ratify that compact. They had no powers to that effect.\* Afterwards, Sir Henry Clinton having refused to grant passport for American vessels to transport provisions and fuel to Boston for the use of the Convention troops, the Congress deemed themselves justifiable in removing those troops to such a part of the United States as they would be best subsisted in ; and Charlottesville, the chief town of Albemarle county, in the State of Virginia, was selected for that purpose. About the middle of November, 1778, the prisoners of Saratoga, were marched from Cambridge and Rhinecland to Virginia, under proper escorts, and reached the place of their destination in the beginning of 1779.

The situation of Charlottesville was well adapted to the double purpose of subsistence for the troops, and of security against their escape. The Convention prisoners might easily be supported at that place, without subducing from those supplies which the counties on the tide waters afforded for the State troops, and the Northern parts of Virginia for the grand army, and the troops under M<sup>o</sup>Intosh, or any other detachment which the uncertain and treacherous conduct of the Indians might, from time to time, render necessary, on the West. To call for either of those purposes, the counties above the tide-waters, in the middle parts of the country, were not accessible, except at such an expence of transportation as the articles would not bear. Here then was an immense field, whose surplus of produce could not be carried to the American army, a field, too, that would be made to produce much more, when an increased demand, and the prospect of benefit, should stimulate enterprise and industry. The mills on the waters of James river, above the falls, open to convenient navigation, were many, and some of them of great note, as manufacturers. The town of Charlottesville itself was surrounded by mills. As to animal subsistence, it might easily be driven from those parts of the State, which abounded in it, to this central point. The safe custody of the troops was another circumstance for which the site of Charlottesville appeared extremely well fitted—equally removed from the access of an Eastern or Western enemy, placed in the very heart of the State, so that should the prisoners attempt an eruption in any direction, they must pass through a greater extent of hostile country, in a neighbourhood thickly inhabited by a robust and hardy people. Zealous in the

---

\* The reason of State shewed itself in the rear of all discussions on this point.

American cause, acquainted with the use of arms ; the defiles and passes by which they must issue, ever watchful, ever ready to crush in its birth any improper movement on the part of the prisoners.

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

Their comfortable situation at that place.

When the latter first arrived at Charlottesville, a momentary embarrassment was felt, and the people experienced some alarm at the consequences which a want of necessary accommodations might produce. The winter was uncommonly severe : the barracks unfinished for want of labourers ; no sufficient stores of bread laid in : and the roads rendered impassable by the inclemency of the weather, and the number of waggons which had lately covered them.—Soon, however, every difficulty and every apprehension vanished. The planters, being more generally sellers than buyers, and finding their own benefit in supplies industriously procured, quickly removed a scarcity merely accidental. To the genius and exertions of Mr. Hawkins during the short time he lived after his appointment to the Commissary department by the board of war, much was also due. That Gentleman had displayed, in the discharge of his duties, the most indefatigable activity, and collected vast quantities of animal food. Nature and observation had fitted him for that sphere of usefulness. His eye immediately pervaded the whole State—this was reduced at once to a regular machine, to a system—and the whole put into movement and animation by the FIAT of his comprehensive mind. The effects of his services out-lived him. Soon the residence of the prisoners assumed a pleasing air of comfort and ease. The officers rented houses and small farms in the neighbourhood ; they purchased cows, sheep, and other domestic animals ; set in to farming, prepared their gardens ; beguiling, in these innocent and useful employments, the tedious hours of captivity, and almost forgetting, in the calm of retirement, the bustle, the pomp, the ambition, and eclat of military life.—The men followed, on a smaller scale, the example of their officers. The environs of the barracks were delightful. The ground was cleared, and divided into small lots, neatly enclosed and cultivated. The gardens, poultry, pigeons, and other rural circumstances, embellished, vivified the landscape, and presented to the mind the idea of a company of farmers rather than of a camp of soldiers. In addition to the barracks erected by the public, the prisoners had built great numbers for themselves, in such messes as fancied each other. In short, the whole corps both officers and men seemed happy ; they had found the art of rendering captivity itself comfortable.

Let these details be excused ! Melancholy and wearisome, indeed, must be the task of the Historian, if condemned to paint no other but scenes of misery, in its various shapes !

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

Why should we spurn, when fatigued with spectacles of rapine and slaughter, those consoling images of mitigated distress, which occasionally invite and relieve our eye?—Such pictures are interesting to all mankind. Friends, foes, and neutrals equally delight in contemplating whatever has a tendency to lessen the horrors of war, and the hardships incident to captivity. With an impression of this kind, we have perused a letter from Mr. Jefferson to Governor Henry, upon hearing that, in consequence of some powers lodged by Congress in the Executive of Virginia, they had it in contemplation to remove the Convention troops, either wholly, or in part, from Charlottesville, at the very time when, chiefly at their own great labour and expence, the prisoners had completed the arrangements which we have mentioned, and when their spirits were sustained by the prospect of comfort and gratification rising before their eyes. Our limits do not permit us minutely to follow the luminous and impressive developments presented in that letter. Suffice it to observe that it produced the intended effect. The Governor and Council became convinced that the removal of the troops would be a breach of public faith; that, if they were removed to another State, or to another part of the State, it would be the fault of the Commissaries, and that in either case, the public interest and security would suffer--the comfortable and plentiful subsistence of the American army be lessened---the health of the Convention troops injured---their wishes crossed, and their comforts torn from them---the character of whim and caprice, or, what was worse, of cruelty, be fixed upon the Americans as a nation--and, to crown the whole, the people themselves be disgusted with such a proceeding. In consequence of this conviction, the troops remained at Charlottesville.

The liberality of Mr. Jefferson's principles impelled him to politeness and generosity towards his new neighbours. "The great cause which divides our countries," he wrote in answer to a card from Gen. Phillips, "is not to be decided by individual animosities. The harmony of private societies cannot weaken national efforts. To contribute by neighbourly intercourse and attention to make others happy, is the shortest and surest way of being happy ourselves. As these sentiments seem to have directed your conduct, we should be as unwise as illiberal, were we not to preserve the same temper of mind." Such ideas, and a conduct always in unison with them, conciliated to Mr. Jefferson the personal respect and good will of the troops, both officers and men.\* We have, at this moment,

\* Whilst in Europe, Mr Jefferson visited Germany. Passing through a Town where one of the Hessian corps that had been at Charlottesville, happened to be in garrison, he met with Baron De Geismar, who immediately apprized his brother officers of Mr. Jefferson's presence. They flocked round him--loaded him with respects and civilities, and spoke of Virginia with sensibility.



before us several letters from Major Generals Phillips and Riedesel--Brigadier Specht--C. De Geismar--J. L. De Ungler--and some others, expressive of gratitude, esteem, and friendly wishes. Phillips emphatically extols Mr. Jefferson's delicate proceedings: Riedesel repeatedly and artlessly pours out his thanks and those of his wife and children; his effusions which flowed from the heart, irresistibly engage our sympathies. "The little attentions you are pleased to magnify so much," Mr. Jefferson replied "never deserved a mention or thought ———— Opposed as we happen to be in our sentiments of duty and honour, and anxious for contrary events, I shall, nevertheless, sincerely rejoice in every circumstance of happiness and safety which may attend you personally." To De Unger, the same gentleman, wrote, "The very small amusements which it has been in my power to furnish, in order to lighten your heavy hours, by no means merited the acknowledgments you make. Their impression must be ascribed to your extreme sensibility rather than to their own weight. When the course of events shall have removed you to distant scenes of action, where laurels not moistened with the blood of my country, may be gathered, I shall urge my sincere prayers for your obtaining every honour and preferment which may gladden the heart of a soldier. On the other hand, should your fondness for philosophy, resume its merited ascendancy, is it impossible to hope that this unexplored country may tempt your residence, by holding out materials, wherewith to build a fame, founded on the happiness and not on the calamities of human nature? Be this as it may---a Philosopher, or a soldier---I wish you personally many felicities." Lieutenant De Unger was fond of literature and science;\* he enjoyed in Mr. Jefferson's library an advantage which his situation and his habits rendered doubly precious. Other officers loved music and painting; they found in him a cultivated taste for the fine arts. They were astonished, delighted; their letters to several parts of Germany, gave of the Virginia character, ideas derived from that noble specimen. These found their way into several Gazettes of the ancient world, and the name of Jefferson was associated with that of Franklin. Surely, this innocent and bloodless conquest over the minds of men whose swords had originally been hired to the oppressors of America, was in itself scarcely less glorious, though in its effects less extensively beneficial, than the splendid train of victories which had disarmed their hands!

---

\* His letters to Mr. Jefferson are all in French—Riedesel wrote some times in French, some times in English. In both cases, the style strongly savours of the German idiom, and gives to the effusions of the writers an air of *moi vete*, which still adds to the interest which they are naturally calculated to inspire.

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

New plan of  
the British.

Another circumstance tended to ensure the comfort and quiet of the troops of Convention at Charlottesville. The sensible, amiable, and humane Colonel Theodorick Bland, commanded the guard placed over them.

Let us now resume our view of military transactions.--- The Southern States were now destined to feel the principal weight of British wrath, and British power. To subjugate the weakest of them, and "to render the rest of as little avail as possible to their new connections," was the determination of the Ministers.\* The royal Commissioners had announced that determination in their threatening manifesto. Of entire subjugation the British Cabinet could scarcely retain a hope. Three unsuccessful campaigns in the North, had conveyed to Great-Britain stern truths in a tone not to be mistaken. To the Southern extremity of the Union, therefore, Sir H. Clinton was directed to turn his chief attention. Georgia and the Carolinas would, it was expected, be easily reduced. Virginia, and all the assailable points of the Middle and Northern States, were to be harrassed and ravaged, with a view to lessen their resources, to prevent them from aiding the principal points of attack, and, especially, to fatigue and exasperate the citizens by repeated and prolonged distresses, and thus to impel them to the abjuration of a government which they would, it was thought, be induced to consider as totally incompetent to the protection of their persons and their property.

Invasion &  
reduction of  
Georgia.

Already the chief post of Georgia was in the power of the British.† Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, had, as we have seen, embarked at New-York, with a body of troops, intended to co-operate, for the reduction of that State, with Gen. Prevost, from East-Florida. Against the latter, the American Major-General Robt. Howe, whose services against Dunmore we have before detailed, had made, in the summer of 1778, an unsuccessful attempt. At the head of 1,500 men, he took post in front of Savannah, up-

---

\* From unavoidable typographical arrangements, our limits imperiously compel us to abridge whatever does not immediately belong to Virginia. The events in Georgia and the two Carolinas, have been amply detailed by British and American Historians. The works of Ramsay, Marshall, H. Lee, are accessible to every American reader.

† The British principle, here avowed by the Ministers and Commissioners of that nation, was not new. It was long before that of the Carthagenians, a people in whose political code morality had no chapter, and with whom, in every transaction, the only question was, what was best for themselves? Observe their conduct towards those friends in Italy, whom they had alienated. "*Præceps in avaritiam et crudelitatem animus, ad spolianda quæ tueri nequibat, ut vastata hosti relinquerentur, inclinavit. Fædum consilium quam incepto, tum exitu, fuit. Neque enim indigna patientium modo abalienabantur animi, sed cæcerorum etiam. Quippe ad plures exemplum, quam calamitas pertinebat*"—Livy. 26, 28.

Singular parallelism of character, of principles, of pursuits, and conduct! It cannot fail to have struck the attention of every reader of History.

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

on the approach of Lieutenant Campbell. His position was judicious: his troops brave, and himself inflexibly bent on vigorous resistance. The accidental discovery of an unguarded path leading to his rear--defeat, with considerable loss in men, baggage, and artillery, was the consequence. Savannah fell into the power of the victor. Prevost, advancing from East Florida, took Sunbury; and after joining Campbell, assumed the command of the united forces. Augusta fell next; and Hamilton proceeded Westwardly, to encourage and protect the Loyalists. His progress could not be checked; but a body of about 700 disaffected, most of them men of lawless and savage disposition, who had fled into the Western wilderness, to avoid the restraints of civil society, was routed by Col. Pickens from S. Carolina. In the subjugation of Georgia, the British experienced no other check. That State now assumed the appearance of a conquered Province. There, but only there, after the Declaration of Independence, was exhibited the singular spectacle of a Legislature convened under the authority of the British Crown. The policy of Campbell and Prevost was mild, and therefore, wise. The people were by protecting measures reconciled to this new change of condition.

Lincoln, the gallant associate of Washington and Gates, and a pupil not unworthy of such masters, had been placed by the provident solicitude of Congress at the head of the Southern department. Two thousands troops sent by North Carolina, with honourable promptitude, to the probable point of attack, had appeared at Charleston, headed by Ashe and Rutherford, and demanding to be armed, and led against the common foe. Alarmed for herself, South Carolina could not immediately part with any of her means of defence. These brave men did not receive muskets until after the disaster of Howe,\* who had precipitately retreated, over the Savannah river, into South Carolina. It was only then that the zealous troops from North Carolina were able to join him--Lincoln took the command of the whole, reinforced by the South Carolina troops. He encamped on the Northern side of the Savannah, watching the first favourable opportunity of crossing that river, striking the enemy, and limiting to the low country, where an insalubrious atmosphere would soon effect more than the sword.

Gen. Lincoln takes the command of the Southern army.

Hitherto the British had been undisturbed in Georgia, except by the daring Pickens. An accession of force from St. Augustine, enabled them to extend their posts. Major

The British are driven from Port

\* An enquiry was afterwards held upon the disaster before Savannah--and Major General Howe honourably acquitted. At this time Howe joined the main army, where he served to the end of the war.



CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

Royal Is-  
land.

February 3.

Ashe is de-  
feated.

March 3.

Prevost  
marches to  
Charleston.

Gardner, with a detachment of two hundred men, took possession of the Island of Port Royal, in South Carolina. He was soon dislodged from that post by General Moultrie, who would have annihilated the whole British detachment, had not ammunition failed his little band of intrepid South Carolinians. This check damped for a moment the ardour of British enterprise; it had a contrary effect on the Americans. Lincoln resolved to act offensively. Brigadier General Ashe, heading a body of about one thousand five hundred militia, was stationed opposite to Augusta. The British abandoned that place, and crossing Brier creek, marched towards Ebenezer, then the head quarters of General Prevost. Ashe crossed the Savannah, and took post behind Brier creek, where it falls into the river. The natural advantages of a situation which secured his front and his left, lulled him into a fatal tranquillity. Making demonstrations of crossing the Savannah, he ordered a strong detachment to take a concealed and circuitous route, and crossing the creek fifteen miles above the Americans, rapidly to fall on their rear. This movement was successfully executed. 150 Americans fell; 162 were taken prisoners. Many were drowned in attempting to re-cross the Savannah; and of the survivors only 450 rejoined Lincoln. This unfortunate event, the offspring of that improvident inattention, incident to young soldiers, deprived the American General of nearly one fourth of his force; it invigorated the British by rekindling the spirit of loyalty and Indian resentment, on the Western borders of the Carolinas.

The situation of South Carolina now became extremely critical. In the existing alarm, extraordinary powers, approximating to dictatorial authority, were vested in John Rutledge, a citizen whose virtues and abilities could alone justify the dangerous experiment. His energetic exercise of the almost unbounded power lodged in his hands, re-created the army. Soon Lincoln was able to resume his plan of recovering and holding Augusta. This was the more desirable, as the time appointed for the meeting of the republican Legislature at that place, had now arrived. Leaving, therefore, to General Moultrie the defence of Purrysburg and Black-Swamp, he himself threatened Augusta. Prevost, instead of marching directly to meet and oppose him, crossed the Savannah near its mouth, and pointed his route towards Charleston. Moultrie retired before him. Lincoln, penetrating his adversary's design, sternly adhered to his original purpose. He detached, however, a corps of three hundred Light Infantry to the relief of Moultrie. Impetuous and unopposed had hitherto been Prevost's advance. The facility of his march, the terror which he spread around him wherever he appeared, the eagerness of the people on his route to claim

May 11.

Retreats.

Invasion of  
Virginia by  
Brigadier  
General  
Mathew.  
May 8.

British protection, the favourable intelligence which they gave of the State of Charleston, emboldened the British leader. What was first intended as a feint, became a fixed plan. But he consumed two days in reposing his troops, and making various arrangements, when advanced near half the distance. This delay saved the Metropolis of South Carolina. Rutledge, who occupied a central position at Orangeburgh, joined Moultrie; and both threw themselves into Charleston, where Pulaski also entered with his dauntless legion. That spirit which had animated the citizens of Charleston, when assailed by General Clinton in 1776, was now gloriously revived. Every effort was made that could promote adequacy of defence, and when Prevost invested and summoned the town, his terms of surrender were rejected. The discussion, however, was intentionally protracted by the Americans, in order to gain time and complete their works. The neutrality of the town and State during the war was proposed,\* but spurned by Prevost. The inhabitants expected an assault the next morning. The dawn, however, discovered to them the retreat of the British. Scarcely had they crossed the Ashley, when Lincoln, who by forced marches, had advanced from Augusta to the relief of Charleston, reached Dorchester, at the entrance of the Isthmus, on the Southern extremity of which Charleston stands——Prevost availing himself of the very mode of retreat which the British shipping afforded, embarked his troops and baggage—proceeded unmolested to John's Island, where he took post, to wait for ammunition and other supplies from New York.†

The assistance of Virginia had been early solicited by the Executive of Carolina. Governor Henry directed one thousand militia to be embodied; and marched to Charleston. Delays and difficulties, arising from the complexion of the times, prevented the immediate execution of the measure. A portion of that number was, however, obtained, and their march was strenuously urged, when Virginia herself was invaded.

When Sir Henry Clinton, whose avowed object it now was to harass and destroy, wherever he could not conquer, surveyed the resources and relative importance of the as-

\* Neither the proposal, nor the rejection of it, can be approved—Dependent must the people have been, and inconsiderate the British General. His triple error—of delay on his route—of delay also in attacking—and, finally, of rejecting terms so promising to the British, and so injurious to America, is unaccountable. But high and proud were the hopes of the British in that quarter.

† Commissioners were sent for that purpose from Charleston to Williamsburg, in February; a letter from Edward Rutledge, to a member of the Legislature, recommending the subject to the attention of the next Session, is dated February 12, 1779.



CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

sailable parts of the Union, he was naturally led to observe the immense benefits of flowing not only to Virginia, but to the States in general, from the foreign and domestic commerce of the Chesapeake and its waters; the opulence of the numerous settlements in the Lower parts of the Commonwealth; and the comparatively unprotected state of those settlements. He well understood the advantages of maritime transportation—which imparts wings to the assailant—which, at will, brings him into contact with his prey—or with eagle-like rapidity, removes him from danger, and enables him merely by shifting the scene of pillage to neutralize and deride, when collected those scattered means of defence, which to collect, employs days, weeks, and months. The large rivers which interest Virginia, and, in time of peace, bring commerce to the door of the agriculturist, and so happily favour the great results of national industry, invite, in time of war, the rude approach of hostility and depredation. When we consider the vast extent of the shores of Virginia and Maryland, washed by navigable waters, and accessible through a passage of a few miles only, we are forcibly struck with the expediency of guarding that passage—either with a fleet, or with floating batteries of immense, yet attainable strength—let an enemy once penetrate into the vast basin formed by the confluence of so many navigable rivers, and it becomes impossible efficiently to protect every vulnerable point. Moveable batteries of a proper structure, and of such power as some modern Archimedes may impart to them, offer the only sure and co-extensive means of defence. Through the Capes, the invader must come, and through the Capes he must return. Spy-boats at sea might easily convey to these batteries, conveniently stationed, notice of his approach, and similar boats in the Bay, give information of his entrance, should he have eluded the vigilance of the former. The combined resources of two opulent States are certainly adequate to the experiment, whenever war shall again disturb our now peaceable shores—and, surely, when the mass of annoyance, injury, and distress to which the want of marine protection may expose the immense extent of assailable country, is considered, calculation decides in favour of some such plan. Forts, or, in other words, fixed batteries, can protect a few points only. The invader must be met on his own element.—He must either be stopped between the Capes, or pursued on that element, in all his incursions. But let us return to our immediate subject.

With the views mentioned above before him, and sensible of the re-action which even a partial and momentary destruction of the resources of Virginia, would exercise on the operations in the more Southern States, General Clinton concerted with Sir George Collier, who had succeeded



Admiral Gambier in the command of the British fleet, a predatory expedition into Virginia. To establish and maintain there a permanent post, was not in his power. To pillage and destruction, he must confine his present attempt. Two thousand men were embarked at New York, under the command of General Matthew. Collier undertook to convoy them in person. The fleet stood to sea on the 5th of May; on the 9th, it anchored in Hampton Roads.

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

The topography of the present scene of invasion is so well known to Virginians, as to render descriptive remarks unnecessary.

We have mentioned the steps taken by the Legislature and the Executive, for internal defence and security. Several points had been fortified, and garrisoned with proportionate numbers of the regiment of artillery. The most important of these fortifications was Fort Nelson, erected on the Western side of Elizabeth river, some distance below Portsmouth. Like other works intended merely against maritime annoyance, Fort Nelson was finished only on the water side, and entirely open in its rear.—Its structure was extremely simple, yet strong. Parallel rows of large logs of timber were closely dove-tailed together, and the intermediate space filled with hard rammed earth—the whole presenting a front 14 feet high, 15 feet thick, and proportionately long.—Major Thomas Matthews commanded in this post,—with about 150 men—some heavy cannon—and a few field pieces\*—To secure from insult the Towns of Norfolk and Portsmouth—and the marine yard at Gosport, was the object for which Fort Nelson had been constructed. Its inadequacy against such a force as the present British armament, was obvious. The fleet consisted of the *Raisonable* of 64 guns, the *Rainbow*, *Otter*, *Diligent*, *Haarlem Sloop*, *Cornwallis's galley*, and some private vessels of war, besides the transports. The troops, as before mentioned, amounted to two thousand chosen men.

The reduction of Fort Nelson was the first thing attempted by the British Commanders. Leaving the *Raisonable* in the roads, on account of her great draught of water, Collier transferred his broad pennant to the *Rainbow*, and with the rest of the fleet proceeded up Elizabeth river.† A contrary wind, and the ebbing of the tide soon obliged the ships to anchor—a calm succeeded and pre-

Fort Nelson  
is evacuated.

May 9.

\* The British return of ordnance taken in the Fort, says : 9 24 pounders —11 6 pounders, on ship carriages.—4 4 pounders, 2 3 pounders, on travelling carriages

† Stedman places this on the 13th of October; a singular mistake, if not altogether attributable to his Printer. He also says that Collier went up in the *Rexown*, which was not on this expedition.

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

May 10.

vented their further progress, till the next morning. Brigadier General Mathew, anxious to avoid a loss of time, embarked the troops in flat boats, and, under cover of the Cornwallis galley, and two gun-boats, effected a landing a few miles below the Fort, at a place called *the Glebe*. The cannonade from the Fort was ineffectual, owing to the distance of the point, where the debarkation took place. A favourable breeze brought up the ships, before the troops were entirely landed.—It was now agreed between Collier and Mathew, that the next morning, the *Rainbow* should, with the tide, move up in front of the Fort, and batter it from the water, whilst the troops should storm it on the land side, where the fortifications were yet unfinished. A forward movement of the British troops immediately after their landing, apprized Major Mathew of their intention. Aware that efficient defence was impracticable, and that, unless speedily executed, a retreat would be impossible, he sent his ammunition up the Southern branch to the Great Bridge, and immediately evacuated the Fort, leaving his colours flying, and spiking up all his guns, except one, a brass field piece, which he removed ;\* the large vessels off Portsmouth were burnt by his orders, and the small ones retired up the Southern branch. The enemy, thus becoming possessed of the Fort, took a strong position, between Portsmouth and the country, and thence detached strong parties to Norfolk, Gosport, Kemp's Landing, and other places of deposit.—A naval force was, at the same time sent up Elizabeth river, and its branches, where a great number of vessels, and an immense quantity of naval and military stores, merchandize, and provisions of all kinds, were either taken or destroyed.—Major Mathew, closely pursued by the enemy with a vastly superior force, burnt all the powder he had with him, except what his men could carry off, and effected a further retreat by way of Northwest landing, as far as Peynemine, in North Carolina—protected by a deep and extensive swamp, called the Dismal.

May 15.

On the 13th, Colonel Lawson wrote from Smithfield to Governor Henry : “ I presume your Excellency by this time is pretty well informed of the strength and movements of the enemy. From accounts which I have received, the cruel and horrid depredations and rapine committed on the unfortunate and defenceless inhabitants who have fallen within their reach, exceed almost any thing yet heard of within the circle of their tragic display of savage barbarity—household furniture, stock of all kind, houses, and in short almost every species of perishable property are effectually destroyed, with unrelenting fury by those *devils incarnate*: murder, ra-

\* See Dixon and Nicolson's Virginia Gazette—May 15, 1779.

“ pine, rape, violence, fill up the dark catalogue of their  
 “ detestable transactions. They surprised and took a  
 “ small body of Frenchmen at the Great Bridge, whom  
 “ they murdered immediately on the spot, to the amount  
 “ of seven. The feelings of humanity are deeply wound-  
 “ ed with reflections on the various and pointed cruel-  
 “ ties, exercised towards our suffering countrymen, and  
 “ call aloud for the most vigorous and spirited exertions.  
 “ The militia at this place, on being informed that arms  
 “ were coming down for them, are much spirited up, and  
 “ profess the greatest desire of revenge and retaliation.”

In another letter, he wrote, “on my way down (from  
 “ Smithfield towards Suffolk) I met numbers of the un-  
 “ fortunate and distressed inhabitants, flying from the ra-  
 “ pid approach of the enemy, with such circumstances of  
 “ distress as language cannot paint. I feel no pleasure in  
 “ enumerating and dwelling upon the distresses of our un-  
 “ happy countrymen and fellow-creatures, but on the pre-  
 “ sent occasion, they exceed any thing in imagination.—  
 “ The enemy are now in possession of Suffolk, a part of  
 “ which is actually in flames, and the whole will probably  
 “ be so in a small time.”

Suffolk, by its local situation, had been rendered a place  
 of infinite importance to the State. When the entrance of  
 the Chesapeake was infested with British cruisers, and the  
 direct foreign commerce of Virginia thus intercepted, a  
 trade was still carried on by the circuitous navigation of  
 Albemarle Sound, through Ocracock Inlet, to the South  
 of Cape Hatteras. The Chowan river was first ascended;  
 then one of its tributary streams, called Black Water, as  
 far as South Quay, in the upper part of Nansemond coun-  
 ty. Thence a land carriage of twenty-four miles was used  
 to Suffolk. In this manner, when the Chesapeake hap-  
 pened to be blockaded, Virginia received, through that  
 Town, various articles of foreign growth and manufacture.  
 Besides, the situation of Suffolk, almost at the confluence  
 of all the navigable waters of Nansemond county, gave it  
 incalculable advantages for domestic commerce—in short,  
 it was a kind of State ware-house, where the produce of  
 the industry, and of the hazardous commercial specula-  
 tions of many citizens, was deposited. The Commissaries  
 of government had lately purchased some thousands of  
 barrels of pork, which lay there, awaiting the orders of  
 the Executive. Of all these circumstances the British  
 had been minutely apprized by disaffected individuals, still  
 numerous in that part of Virginia, though obliged, since  
 the discomfiture and flight of Dunmore, to conceal their  
 real sentiments, and to remain inactive. Great, therefore,  
 were their anxiety and impatience, to destroy a place of  
 so much value and utility to the Commonwealth.

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

May 13.

Burning of  
Suffolk.

May 13.



CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

No sooner was intelligence received of the arrival of the British in Hampton Roads than the militia of Nansemond county were called to arms. Suffolk was the place of general rendezvous. About two hundred men assembled there, with such weapons as they could procure from their own homes. Few of them had muskets—and still fewer, ammunition. This, however, they obtained from Captain Bright, who commanded the letter of marque, the brig Mars. Bright also furnished two pieces of ordnance, which were immediately mounted upon the carriages of carts. The whole of this little army, headed by Colonel Willis Riddick, proceeded about eight miles on the Norfolk road, and, on the evening of the 11th of May, encamped in a large uncultivated field, in front of Capt. James Murdaugh's house. Before this movement, three well mounted young Virginians, Josiah Riddick, Thomas Granbury, and Thomas Brittle, had been dispatched to reconnoitre the enemy. They were surprized and made prisoners, just below Hall's mills, in Norfolk county—conveyed to New York, where they remained for 18 months in a state of captivity. Thus did the party under Colonel Riddick continue in entire ignorance of the numbers and motions of the enemy.

To a tavern, about a mile below the encampment of the militia, Captains King and Davis had repaired for the night. In front of this tavern, was a lane with draw-bars at its extremity. These were soon heard to rattle; alarmed at this noise, King and Davis seized their muskets, and flew to the door. King leaped out, and fired to give the alarm. The British platoon discharged, and shot Davis through the heart. King, well acquainted with the country, soon reached the Virginian camp, and informed his comrades of approaching hostility. The violence of the wind, blowing in an unfavourable direction, had prevented them from hearing the report even of the British musketry, discharged so near them. Colonel Willis Riddick, not suspecting the approach of the foe, had retired to his own house. The command, therefore, devolved upon Col. Edward Riddick. The militia retraced their steps to Suffolk, which they reached before the dawn. Two officers, mounted on fleet horses, were then dispatched to ascertain the situation and force of the enemy. Four miles below Suffolk, they halted, and immediately after sun rise, in the entrance of a lane, about one quarter of a mile long, had a full view of the advancing foe, and distinctly counted 600 infantry. They rode back in full speed, and, upon calling the militia to arms, about one hundred only obeyed the call. The others had dispersed. A retreat became unavoidable—every man was admonished to take care of himself. Most of the inhabitants had already left their homes. Few could save their effects. Such as delayed

their flight in attempting to secure their property, were taken prisoners. Ruthless devastation attended the British. They set fire to the Town, and nearly the whole was consumed. Several hundred barrels of tar, pitch, turpentine, and rum, had been deposited on lots contiguous to the wharves. The heads of the barrels being knocked out, and their contents, which flowed in a commingled mass, catching the blaze, descended to the river, like torrents of burning lava. As the wind blew from the wharves with great violence, these substances with difficulty soluble in water, rapidly floated to the opposite shore, in a splendid state of conflagration, which they communicated to the thick and decaying herbage of an extensive marsh, the growth of the preceding year. This immense sheet of fire, added to the vast columns of undulating flames, which ascended from the burning houses in the Town—the explosion, at intervals, of the gun-powder in the magazines—the consequent projection, through the air, of large pieces of ignited timber, which flew, like meteors, to an astonishing distance—all contributed to form a collective scene of horror, and sublimity, and desolation, such as could not be viewed without emotions not to be described.

The ravages of this expedition were completed by destroying several hundred barrels of pork, deposited at the house of Colonel Willis Riddick, for the use of the Virginian army. The Gazettes of that day, and oral tradition, have preserved the memory of particular acts of brutality, which verified the anticipations of the prophetic Chatham. War was no longer honourable. The British incendiaries retired as they had come, unmolested.

To Europeans the facility with which such predatory incursions were executed, on this side of the Atlantic, appeared, in a great measure, unaccountable. Accustomed, as they were to the density of a crowded population, to the systematic defence of consolidated governments, and to the effects of absolute power, the strong arm of which either protects or crushes with promptitude and energy, they could scarcely grasp in imagination the real state of things in America—an immense extent of assailable country—only a few standing troops, stationed at prominent points, and inadequate to extensive protection—local and general defence chiefly devolving, in invasion, upon the great body of the militia—slowly assembled—slowly organized—most often undisciplined, and badly armed. Under such circumstances, no wonder that an enemy, possessing extensive means of maritime transportation, should be able to harass, plunder, destroy, in desultory and piratical expeditions. These physical disadvantages neither zeal, nor courage, nor patriotism could counteract. A marauding foe unexpectedly appeared—slaughter, conflagration, ra-

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

pine marked his rapid steps. The militia ran to arms—collected, advanced—chastisement hung over the foe, he fled to his ships, adding insult and derision to unavenged injury. The British imitated their Danish ancestors—to imitate the great Alfred—to create naval protection, was the only road to security. But the time had not yet come.

Whilst part of the British armament was thus ravaging the lower country, the Otter Sloop, and several privateers sailed up the Chesapeake, and, entering its principal waters, committed similar depredations with correspondent success. Vast quantities of tobacco, an article to which much public, as well as private attention had been paid since the war, because incalculable benefits arose from its exportation, were either shipped off, or destroyed. The plunderers did not discriminate between private and public property. The loss sustained both by the government and individuals, was immense. After effecting all the injury in their power, Collier and Mathew, sailed back to New York, where they arrived towards the close of May.

From the difficulties and delays unfortunately connected with the system of internal defence, they had, in this desultory expedition met with few obstacles. The Legislature of Virginia had assembled at Williamsburg, on the 3d of May. About two thousand men, destined for the Continental army, were on the point of repairing thither, under the command of General Scott. The present emergency induced the Assembly to detain them.—Scott was instructed to arm, organize, and lead them to the invaded parts of the State. Governor Henry, in the mean time, issued a Proclamation, stating the landing of the enemy, the evacuation of Fort Nelson, and the subsequent events already described; and requiring the county Lieutenants and other military officers in the Commonwealth, and especially those on the navigable waters, to hold their respective militias in readiness to oppose the attempts of the enemy, wherever they might be made.—On the 20th, the Legislature, upon the recommendation of Congress and of the Commander in Chief, ordered the two thousand recruits, and the militia originally draughted for that service, to march to South Carolina, retaining General Scott, however, to direct military operations during the present invasion.\* Bland and Baylor's regiments of horse were also marched to the South, so that the immediate defence of the Commonwealth now entirely rested on the militia and the State troops. An act was passed to give the militia more regularity and energy.

This invasion produced several Legislative measures, which it is proper to mention in this place. The savage cha-

Legislative  
proceed.

---

\* General Scott was, by the Assembly, presented with a horse, and a donation in money, for his zeal and activity on that occasion.



CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

ings rela-  
tive to the  
invasion.

acter of a mode of warfare which distinguished not between armed opponents and helpless citizens, between public and private property, and which openly violating all the rules and usages of civilized societies, provoked retaliation in so awful a manner as to threaten both parties with calamities to which no limits could be assigned. induced the Legislature to remonstrate to the British Commander, through the medium of the Governor, against this war, of which devastation, murder and rapine, seemed to be the direct objects. Surely, the occasion required physical, rather than moral force; yet, the appeal of nations to reason and humanity is seldom entirely lost. It has, at least, the advantage of enlisting on their side the feelings of the virtuous part of mankind. Severe retaliation on the persons and property of British subjects in Virginia, was subsequently denounced. In the mean time a resolution was passed, desiring the Governor and Council to cause to be purchased and conveyed to the sufferers a quantity of provisions adequate to their wants until the ensuing harvest.—North Carolina, placed, at this epoch between two invaded States, was no less prompt in tendering assistance to Virginia than to South Carolina. The Assembly of that State offered a regiment against the late invaders; Brigadier General Jones was to command this auxiliary force. The thanks of Virginia were notified in an appropriate resolution. Present danger, and a full conviction that the seat of war now was, or would soon be, transferred to the South, produced several acts tending to invigorate the military system. For internal defence, the Governor was empowered immediately to raise 4500 volunteers; and as many troops of cavalry as he should deem expedient—together with four regiments of infantry. The encouragements offered for this service were on the most liberal scale. Whilst adopting such measures for domestic security, the Assembly did not lose sight of the general interest. On the 9th of March, Congress had called on the several States for the completion of their respective quotas of 80 battalions. The Legislature, desirous not only of furnishing their quota of troops then wanting, but also of keeping up the same by voluntary enlistments, passed an act for appointing a recruiting officer to be resident in each county, whose constant endeavours it should be to enlist within this county, soldiers to serve during the war. To stimulate the industry of that officer, he was allowed 150 paper dollars\* for every man he should enlist. That the people within the county might encourage the recruiting service, they were to have credit, in any future draught, for all the men their recruiting officer should

---

\* Then worth 12 1-2 hard dollars.—The depreciation was 12 1-2, to 1.

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

Board of  
trade and  
Board of  
War esta-  
blished.

raise; and the soldier was to receive a bounty of 750 paper-dollars,\* the advantage of laying out his pay in the public store at the hard money prices, and the other usual donations of clothes and lands. Similar provisions were made to raise sailors and marines for the service of the Commonwealth. Although the small navy of the State could not contend with the large armed ships of Britain, still it had been serviceable against the petty marauders, who occasionally entered the Bay. To energize its efforts was obviously desirable.

The duties of the Governor and Council had, from the circumstances of the times, become numerous, complex, difficult. To relieve the Executive from an immense load of details, two auxiliary boards were established. The first a board of trade, to consist of three persons, not exercising commerce on private account, to be chosen by the General Assembly—and to act under the superintendence of the Governor and Council. The functions of this board are implied in its denomination. They embraced whatever related to the Governmental trade of that day. The second, a board of war—to be composed of 5 persons, also chosen by the Legislature. Their proceedings, resolutions and orders, were to be signed by the Governor, before they could be carried into execution. As naval matters properly formed a branch of the military department, and did not embrace a very extensive range, the navy board was suppressed—and its functions attributed to the new boards of war, and of trade. Revolutions are seasons of experiment—we will soon see these institutions assuming a new and simpler form.

Property of  
British sub-  
jects order-  
ed to be  
sold.

We have seen, that in the year 1777, the General Assembly, though provoked by the example of their enemies to a departure from that generosity which so honourably distinguishes the civilized nations of the present age, yet desirous to conduct themselves with moderation and temper, took measures for securing what had been the property of British subjects within the Commonwealth, from waste and destruction, by putting the same into the hands and under the management of Commissioners appointed for that purpose, that so it might be in their power, if reasonable, at a future day, to restore to the former proprietors its full value. The Assembly, now reverting to the political principles which forbade an alien to hold land in the State, and desirous to prevent the loss, waste, and damage which necessarily arose from neglect or other causes to the public, if such property should not be restored to the former owners, if it should, ordered all British property to be sold: as depreciation was then sensibly felt, and made

---

\* Equal to 62 1-2 hard dollars.

it necessary to guard against eventual losses, it was enacted that the proceeds of the sales should be converted into their then worth of tobacco, and retribution, if agreed upon, be effected in quantity and kind. By another act, the moveable property of persons who had left the Commonwealth, and gone off with the enemy, either before or during the late invasion, was directed to be secured and disposed of by the respective Escheators of the different counties. These measures rendered it proper to characterize British subjects in such a manner as to prevent double injustice, and oppression. A legal definition was therefore annexed, of the persons comprehended under that name. It divided them into three classes; the first, including all individuals, subjects of *His Britannic Majesty, who, on the 19th of April 1775, when hostilities were commenced at Lexington, between the United States of America and Great Britain, resided or followed their vocations, in any part of the world other than the said United States, and had not since either entered into public employment of the said States, or joined the same, and by overt act adhered to them; the second, all such subjects, inhabitants of any of the said United States, as were out of the said States on the same day, and had since by overt act adhered to their enemies; the third, all inhabitants of the said States, who, after the same day, and before the commencement of the act of General Assembly declaring what should be treason, had departed from the said States and joined the subjects of his Britannic Majesty, of their own free will, or who, by any County Court within the Commonwealth, had been declared to be British subjects, within the meaning and operation of the Resolution of General Assembly (Dec'r. 19th, 1776) for enforcing the Statute Staple. The Governor was directed, by a resolution of the General Assembly, to banish from the State all Tory refugees, whether natives of Virginia, or other parts of the Union; and to prevent the return into the Commonwealth of any person who might fall within the description of the act mentioned above.*

In the 15th century, a doctrine prevailed, inconsistent, in the sense and extent given to it, with the eternal principles of justice, and irreconcilable to the natural rights of mankind. It was the confuse, unexplained, notion that the first discoverers of any particular part of the new world, had a right to take possession of it, in the name of their respective sovereigns, and that such a discovery and such a formality conferred a fair, indisputable title. It would have been well to revert to the first principles of natural law, which founds justice or injustice in what promotes or wounds human happiness, in what is conformable or repugnant to the will of the Great Author of things.



CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

Man is by nature indefinitely perfectible. It is not necessary for any portion of our species to stagnate in a rude, savage state, where subsistence is derived from the chase alone. The pastoral, agricultural, commercial and manufacturing modes of existence are no less natural than the hunting state, because men are capable of them all from inherent principles, which certain circumstances develop with more or less rapidity and efficacy. By the law of nature, the Earth is the common property of mankind; and, surely, no particular portion of the human race is entitled to an immense extent of country for the mere purposes of hunting and fishing, whilst other societies are compressed within narrow limits, where the united efforts of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, can with difficulty support a crowded population. The latter was the case with some of the European nations that made discoveries in America—and the former with the natives of the discovered countries.\* Morality, then, the essence of which consists in whatever conduces to human happiness, consistently with the will of the Supreme Being, could not be wounded by an arrangement which either placed it in the power of the rude, scattered inhabitants of those countries to adopt and cultivate the arts of civilized life, or offered to them an equivalent for the whole or part of a Territory to which they had only a common claim with the new comers. Hence it appears that the claim of each European sovereign amounted only to this: "that, within certain limits, his subjects should exclusively possess the right of dividing uncultivated lands with the natives, or of purchasing those lands from the said natives." Soon an obvious policy confined this right of pre-emption to each Sovereign himself. Hence a rule strictly adhered to and established by law in Virginia, whilst a Colony of Great Britain, "that the agents of the Crown alone could purchase from the Indians, and that such purchases should be for the public benefit." Contracts made with Indians by individuals, in their private character, and for their own use, were of no avail in law. The declaration of Independence, in 1776, transferred to the Commonwealth the rights of the Crown, and a clause in the republican constitution expressly declared "that no purchase of lands should be made of the Indian

---

\* Writers whose intentions we applaud, whose eloquence we admire, but, whose effusions too often enlist the feelings against the judgment, have vehemently reprobated the first European settlements. So far as they claim our sympathies for the poor enslaved or murdered Indians in South America, and other parts, they are commendable—but let the question be placed on a fair ground—let proper distinctions be made. Finally, let the grand result be considered—surely, it will be found in favour of humanity. What! because a few individuals of the universal family chose to roam and hunt through the endless forest, must the incalculable mass of past, present, and future happiness from the settlement of America, have been lost!

natives but in behalf of the public, by authority of the General Assembly."

The vast extent of country included in the charters of Virginia, is well known. By subsequent grants of the Crown, this was contracted on the North and the South. The Atlantic, its Eastern boundary, was permanent by nature. At the peace of 1763, the Western limits of the British dominions, so long undefined, were fixed by a line drawn along the middle of the river Mississippi. Thus Virginia always possessed, on the side of the West, immense tracts of unappropriated lands. Vast quantities of these lands were after clearing the Indian title, applied to the remuneration of military services. Such were the grants made upon and near the Ohio to the officers and soldiers of the first Virginia regiment, in accordance with the proclamation of Governor Dinwiddie, in 1754. Patents and warrants for other lands, to a considerable extent, were issued to military men, under a proclamation of George III, in 1763. Some years after an application was made to the British Crown by a Mr. Walpole and others, to grant them a proprietary charter, and create a new government, between the Alleghany mountains and the river Ohio. This was refused, because it would have been a violation of the Virginia charter, and not only taken away great part of the Territory of the Colony, which was always understood to extend Westward of the Alleghany Mountains, on both sides of the Ohio river, but removed from the immediate protection of the Crown, and the government and laws of Virginia several thousands of inhabitants settled there, under the faith of royal charters, as well as many subsequent acts of government, and the encouragement of public laws. Lands were granted on easy conditions,\* but according to certain rules, which rendered Indian conveyances to individuals legally void, unless ratified by the government.

During the last war, a company of traders had sustained considerable losses from the depredations of several tribes of Indians; after the peace of 1763, those traders obtained from the same Indians, as a compensation for the injuries inflicted on them, a cession of "all that tract of land beginning at the Southerly side of the little Kan-hawa creek, where it empties itself into the river Ohio, and running thence South East to the Laurel Hill, until it strikes the Monongahela, thence down the stream of the said river, according to the several courses thereof to the Southern boundary line of the Province of Pennsyl-

\* Ancient terms.... Composition, 10 sh's. sterling for every 100 acres. Annual quit rent 2 sh's. sterling.

In 1774, the terms were made. 50 sh's. sterling per 100 acres, and a quit rent of 1-2 penny per acre.

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

“vania; thence Westwardly along the course of the said Province boundary line as far as the same shall extend; thence by the same course to the river Ohio, and thence down the river Ohio, to the place of beginning inclusive-ly.”—The amount of the losses sustained by the injured traders was stated at 85,916*l.* 10*s.* 8*d.* York currency.—It was evident, upon the face of the above cession, that the damage complained of, even if not exaggerated, was far surpassed by the compensation. But the claim of the persons in whose favour the cession had been made, was not subjected to this test. It was contrary to the rule of pre-emption, above explained, and, on that account, it had never been admitted by the Colonial government of Virginia. The same reason now prevented it from being recognized by the General Assembly, in whose hearing it was solemnly discussed, at this Session. They passed resolutions importing that no person ever had a right to purchase any lands, within the limits of the chartered territory of Virginia, from any Indian nation, except only persons duly authorized to make such purchases on the public account, formerly for the use and benefit of the Colony—and lately of the Commonwealth—that the exclusive right of pre-emption ought to be, and should be, maintained by the Commonwealth to the utmost of its power—that all lands heretofore purchased from any Indians by the British Crown, within the limits before mentioned, ought to be appropriated to the use and benefit of the Commonwealth and to no other use or purpose whatsoever—that, therefore, the deed from the six United nations of Indians, dated November 3*d.* 1768, for the use and benefit of William Trent and others, was utterly void and of no effect—We shall have occasion to observe the energy with which the Legislature of Virginia resisted the interference of Congress in this, and other similar claims, until she ceded her western territory to the Union. She uniformly and peremptorily asserted the exclusive right of the Commonwealth to purchase from the Indians, for the public benefit. The Indiana company (such was the collective appellation of the claimants in the above case) might have effected an equitable compromise with the Commonwealth—a proposal to that effect was made to them but they insisted on the whole extent of their claims. Previously to this, a purchase made from the Cherokee Indians by Richard Henderson and company, had been declared void: yet, from motives of justice and expediency, a tract of land on the waters of the Ohio and Green rivers, had been amicably allowed to these purchasers.

Two important bills, connected with the subject of lands, were passed, at this session—the one for establishing a land office—the other for adjusting and settling the claims to unpatented lands under the former and present Govern-



CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

ment, previously to the establishment of the land office. These acts were loudly called for, to settle existing, and obviate future disputes, among the people of the back settlements. A confusion of discordant claims, and clashing titles, was then daily increasing, and threatened great embarrassment and distress. The lands promised to the troops of Virginia, either on Continental or State establishment, were secured to them; and a mode of sales regulated, for the purpose of creating a sinking fund in aid of the annual taxes to discharge the public debt.\* Purchases of lands from the public were attended with a peculiar advantage. The payment was, indeed, substantial and real to the State, yet it was, in some measure, nominal to the purchasers, who, with the very money which acquired an estate for his posterity, was relieving them from a proportionate load of taxes, which must otherwise, at some future day, come out of their hereditary property.

In the adjustment of certain boundaries, hitherto destitute of satisfactory precision, between Virginia and two States contiguous to her, N. Carolina and Pennsylvania, the Assembly justly extended their solicitude to the legitimate claims of settlers, under the authority and protection of government. Those difficulties which, at first, threatened to interrupt mutual harmony, were amicably removed.

On the 2nd of January, 1779, Congress, viewing with anxiety, the increasing evils of depreciation, and wishing not only to stop further emissions of Continental bills, but likewise to reduce the amount already issued, and, at the same time, to provide for the current expences of the year, called upon the States to pay into the Continental Treasury their respective quotas of fifteen million of dollars for present purposes, and of six millions annually, to form a sinking fund. On the 21st of May, the States were again called upon to furnish their quotas of forty-five millions of dollars, for the service of the running year. By the resolution of January 2nd, Virginia was to pay for the year 1779, two millions and four hundred thousand dollars, and annually, to commence in 1780, one million of dollars towards a reduction of former Continental emissions: by the resolution of May 21st, she was to pay a future quota of seven millions and two hundred thousand dollars. To these sums must be added, those required for internal purposes. The taxes before laid—the money obtained by loans—by sales of the public lands—and of British property, could not supply these multiplied and enormous demands. The sphere of taxation was, therefore, enlarged,

Financial  
provisions.

\* The price fixed by the act was forty pounds for every hundred acres. The depreciation, in 1779, fluctuated from 5 or 6 for one, to 27 or 28 for one, between January and October.

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

and the Treasurer was authorized to issue, in dollars, State bills, to the amount of one million of pounds. An experiment was made, which gave to Congress the idea of a requisition for specific supplies. It was a tax to be paid in determinate quantities of Indian corn, wheat, hemp, rye, tobacco, and other agricultural products. This plan was, at the time, much approved—and notwithstanding the difficulties attendant on its execution, imitated in many States.

The tender law is repealed.

We have mentioned the effects of the act to support the credit of the Continental and State bills, so fatal to individuals, whilst they vitally promoted the collective interest. That act was now repealed.\* No indemnification was, however, afforded to the victims of the tender-law. The labyrinth of injury was so extensive, and so intricate, that no thread could guide enquiry, through its mazes. As opinion is not regulated by law, the act under view had not been able to buoy up the sinking credit of the paper currency, from the moment the public confidence in its redemption had ceased to support it. Depreciation had daily increased; and such was now its ratio that many useful citizens, raised by the suffrages of the community to offices of trust, found themselves compelled to retire from situations, to the dignity of which their salaries had become inadequate, and in which even the sacrifice of their private fortunes could scarcely enable them to continue with decency. This induced the General Assembly again to augment the emoluments of most public officers;† but the value of the Continental and State bills constantly varying, and there being no data to determine its decrease within a given period, it frequently happened that what was originally deemed a liberal support, soon melted away to an insufficient pittance. Public spirit alone could, under such circumstances, attach men to the service of their country.

Act for removing the seat of government.

It may be recollected, that in the year 1746, under Governor Gooch, a strenuous, but fruitless attempt was made to transfer the seat of government to some convenient,

\* We will see the new emissions again made a legal tender, but in a less objectionable form.

† To Members of Assembly,	-	-	50 lb. of Tobacco per day.
Congress,	-	-	40 dollars per day
Governor,	-	-	4,500 pounds per annum.
Members of Council,	-	-	7,200 do. to be divided, &c.
Treasurer,	-	-	3,000 do.
Auditors of Public Accounts, each,	-	-	1,500 do.
Members of Board of War, each,	-	-	1,500 do.
of Trade, each,	-	-	2,000 do.
Judges of Superior Courts, each,	-	-	1,200 do.
Attorney-General,	-	-	1,200 do.

It has already been remarked that depreciation varied this year from 6 to 28 for 1, between Jan. and Oct. At the close of the year, 40 for 1.

and promising scite. The same idea now recurred; and although local interest struggled for a moment against the proposed removal, Richmond was ultimately fixed upon as the seat of Government, after the first day of April, 1780. The reasons assigned in the preamble of the act passed to that effect are, greater facility of access for the generality of the people to the Legislature, the Executive Department, and the Superior Courts of Justice: extensive advantages of navigation for the growth of the new Metropolis to a size commensurate with the dignity of the State; and the purposes in view; and lastly, security from the insults and injuries of the public enemy. Temporary buildings were deemed sufficient: edifices on a larger and more magnificent scale, were reserved for the time, when under the auspices of liberty and peace, agriculture, commerce, and the arts, should pour into the lap of the State streams of private and public wealth.

Among the labours of this session, we observe an act respecting naturalization and expatriation, of which we cannot too much commend the liberal policy. Its operation has been superseded by subsequent institutions; but that philanthropy which opened, in Virginia, an assylum to individuals of any nation not at open war with America, upon their removing to the State to reside, and taking an oath of fidelity; and that respect for the natural and social rights of men, which lays no restraints whatever on expatriation, and claims the allegiance of citizens, so long only as they are willing to retain that character, cannot be forgotten. The Legislators of Virginia well knew that the strongest hold of a government on its citizens is that affection which rational liberty, mild laws, and protecting institutions never fail to produce, especially, when physical advantages march in front with political blessings, and industry and worth are perennial sources of comfort and respectability.

To this session also belongs, in some measure, a monument of Legislation, evidently the work of men uniting the enlarged, profound, and systematic views of philosophers, with the liberal sentiments of philanthropists, and the immense, detailed, and intricate knowledge of consummate lawyers. We allude to the "Report of the Committee of Revisors," appointed in 1776. In the course of their labours, the committee were deprived of the assistance and abilities of two of their associates, T. Ludwell Lee and G. Mason—of the one by death—of the other by resignation. As before that loss, the basis of this admirable fabric in view, had been settled, the remaining members proceeded with indefatigable zeal, to complete the superstructure; and, on the 18th day of June, T. Jefferson, and G. Wythe, authorized by Edmund Pendleton, to notify his concurrence, reported to the General Assembly one hundred and twenty-

Act declar-  
ing who  
shall be  
deemed ci-  
tizens.

Report of  
the Com-  
mittee of  
Revisors.

June 18.



CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

six bills, forming a code of civil and criminal law, founded, indeed, upon the English system of jurisprudence, but pure from its monarchical corruptions, and free from its feudal shackles. To enumerate all the excellent laws proposed by the reporters, most of which have since been adopted, and constitute the best parts of our code, does not fall within the province of history. The report itself is accessible to every Virginian; and it has been abundantly commented upon, and justly praised,\* even by European philosophers. Yet, the attention of the historian is irresistibly arrested by a particular system of bills of which Thomas Jefferson was the author, and than which nothing could be better calculated to crush forever the eternal antagonism of artificial aristocracy against the rights and happiness of the people. These bills were marshalled in a phalanx for that exalted purpose, embracing, 1st. Freedom of religion.—2nd. Suppression of entails.—3rd. Equal partition of inheritances.—4th. General education. With the last object, was connected a division of the different counties into wards or townships. Already, at the first session of the General Assembly, after the declaration of Independence, a law had been passed, abolishing entails. The privilege of primogeniture had likewise been suppressed, and a law made to divide the lands of intestates equally among all their children, or other representatives. Religious freedom was not so speedily established in its perfection, this was delayed until the year 1786. Owing to the slow progress even of the most salutary ideas in certain matters. Thus was the axe laid to the root of that undue influence which the church, wealth, and birth had hitherto exercised. Equality of conditions was nurtured—freedom and elasticity restored to the human mind, throughout the State. To crown the noble work, it remained only to raise the mass of the people to the high ground of moral respectability, necessary to their own safety, and to orderly government, by adopting the measures proposed in the bill for general education. Then might the people have been properly and beneficially trusted with the exercise of all the smaller powers of government, to which they would have been fully competent, and which constitute a great mass of salutary and important powers.

Why has not the admirable bill, which, by carrying education to every man's door, would elicit genius and worth from their obscurest recesses, yet been acted upon by the great Council of the State? Is it less important than that for a reform of the penal code, the substance of which has since been so beneficially adopted? If we could pre-

---

\* Tucker's Blackstone—British Spy—Wythe's Memoirs—Demaubnier's *Econ. Pol. Etats Unis*—For the plan of revision, see Jefferson's Notes on Virginia.—Page 226, &c.

sume to add any thing to the luminous developements of its impressive preamble, we would observe that the situation of Virginia cannot always be so favourable to virtue, liberty, and good social order, as it is at present. Population will increase, and inherent principles of corruption and degeneracy be gradually, perhaps rapidly, evolved. To counteract their operation, let knowledge be universally diffused—Let it become the key-stone of the political edifice—we mean that knowledge, which, according to the true and important intent of the bill, will “render the people the safe, as they are the ultimate guardians of their liberties;” enable the governed to controul the Governors, and eventually to become so in their turn; in short, like the blood in the human system, pervade, animate, and energize all the parts of the body politic. That liberty and ignorance cannot dwell together in organized government, abstract views of human nature, and a multitude of facts on record, equally confirm. The stern finger of experience points, for our admonition, to more than one case in which the sanguine hopes and virtuous efforts of the friends of humanity have been defeated by ignorance and the vices which it generates—by the absence of fixed principles of opinion and conduct, in a degraded portion of the people, easily made the blind instruments of cunning, wicked, and ambitious factionists, and incapable of being restrained to rational action, except by physical force, in the necessity for which despotism always finds its triumph.\*—Many a great drama has been brought to this sad catastrophe; and ours is the task to profit by the example. May some patriotic spirit, at no distant day, call up the subject in the Legislature of Virginia;† and acquit the state, before the tribunal of posterity,

---

\* See Sampson in the Bible—strong, invincible, whilst virtuous—yielding to the allurements of pleasure and robbed of his vigour—then come the Philistines, who *put out his eyes* and make him turn a mill-stone. —*Put out the minds’ eyes*, and the mill-stone of despotism is ready.

† The bill proposes to divide every county into wards of 5 or 6 miles square.—To establish in each ward a free school for reading, writing, and common arithmetic—to provide for the annual selection of the best subjects from these schools, who might receive at the public expence a higher degree of education at a district school—and from these district schools, to select a certain number of the most promising subjects, to be completed at an university, where all the useful sciences should be taught, worth and genius would thus be sought out of every condition of life, and completely prepared by education for defending the competition of wealth and birth for public trusts. Had this bill been adopted, we have understood that Mr. Jefferson had in contemplation a further object; It was to impart to the wards or Townships those portions of self government for which they are best qualified, by confiding to them the care of their poor, their roads, police, elections, the nomination of jurors, administration of justice in small cases, elementary exercise of militia; in short, to have made them little republics with a warden at the head of each, for all those concerns which, being under their eye, they would better manage than the larger republics of the country or State. A general call of ward-meetings by their wardens on the same day, through the State, would, at any time, produce

CHAP.  
XIV.

1779

P. Henry  
resigns the  
office of Go-  
vernor.

of the awful charge of neglect and apathy, in relation to its best interests !

Mr. Henry had been raised to the office of Governor before the States had been formally declared Independent. and by the same Convention that drew up and proclaimed the Constitution of Virginia. in May, 1776. Two Legislatures, under that constitution, had successively re-appointed him. It was a doubt with some, whether the first year of his magistracy made part of the constitutional term. or was merely provisory. That patriotic gentleman, however, precluded all difficulties on that point, by declining a re election, if it should be judged that his constitutional term of office had not expired. He received, by the organ of the General Assembly, the thanks of his country. for the dignity and zeal with which he had discharged the duties of his high station. During almost the whole of Mr. Henry's government, Virginia was happily exempted from internal war. Soon after his promotion, the predatory efforts of Dunmore were crushed. and the short invasion of Mathew took place towards the close of his administration. The disaffected were comparatively few in Virginia. and, since the flight of Dunmore, these few had been reduced to inaction, or to desultory and impotent efforts. Indeed, disaffection never was formidable in the State. The established clergy, before the revolution, having been secured by fixed salaries against rivalry, had not given themselves the trouble to acquire much influence over the people. and, of course, could do no extensive harm. Dissenting clergymen were all in favor of a state of things which shielded them from persecution, and they zealously laboured for

the genuine sense of the people on any required point, and would enable the State to act in a mass, as is done in some other States.

Although we have already expatiated much on the subject of general education, we cannot refrain from quoting some appropriate and forcible remarks, found in *Ramsay's History of the American revolution*

"From the influence, says that respectable historian, which knowledge had in securing and preserving the liberties of America, the present generation may trace the wise policy of their fathers, in erecting schools and colleges. They may also learn that it is their duty to found more and support all such institutions. Without the advantages derived from these lights of this new world, the United States would probably have fallen in their unequal contest with Great Britain. Union, which was essential to the success of their resistance, could scarcely have taken place, in the measures adopted by an ignorant multitude. Much less could wisdom in council, unity in system, or perseverance in the prosecution of a long and self-denying war, be expected from an uninformed people. It is a well known fact, that persons unfriendly to the revolution, were always most numerous in those parts of the United States, which had never been illuminated, or but faintly warmed, by the rays of science. The uninformed, and the misinformed, constituted a great proportion of those Americans who preferred the leading-strings of the Parent-State, though encroaching on their liberties, to a government of their own countrymen and fellow-citizens."—He might have added—*chosen by themselves, accountable, &c. &c.*



the common cause. As to wealthy individuals, they had, most of them, been unpopular even before the revolution. The heads of those families, in which, under the English law of entails, great accumulations of wealth had been handed down from generation to generation, had generally been ambitious of a seat in the King's Council—and paid their court exclusively to the Crown, and its creatures—in all collisions between the King and people, they had *philippized*.—Hence the popular jealousy, which stripped them of all influence. Many of them, too, heartily joined the banners of their country. Some retained old attachments, old ideas, and prejudices—and, in a few cases, temporary restraints on personal liberty, were judged necessary. But it is the just, fond, and honorable boast of Virginia, that, except in the field of battle, human blood never was shed by her patriotic sons. We have seen the laws for the sequestration, and afterwards the sale of British property—for the removal of British merchants, and disaffected persons. In the execution of those mild repressive measures—in superintending military levies either for the Continental or the State army—directing internal fortifications—and commercial enterprizes on the public account—promoting the supplies and comforts of the troops—endeavouring to obtain loans in Europe,\* finally, in those silent, yet beneficial operations, which consolidate the liberties and happiness of a country, Mr. Henry was, during the period of his government, actively and zealously employed. The abilities of a good pilot shine most in great tempests; yet, they are not totally neutralized even whilst favourable breezes assist in guiding the ship to its destined port. Among the many circumstances which immortalize Mr. Henry, there is one, particularly entitling him to the esteem of his fellow-citizens. The faction which, in the winter of 1777—8, aimed at superseding General Washington, knew well the importance of enlisting into its ranks, and perhaps, of placing at its head, such a man as the Governor of Virginia. Anonymous letters were written to him, denouncing the Commander in Chief, as inadequate to his high trust; and pointing out the contemplated remedy. In these letters, Henry was adroitly flattered—and his ability to aid in effecting the desired change, insidiously urged. Indignant at this unworthy intrigue, he informed his illustrious countryman of the whole; expressing at the same time, the most unbounded confidence, in his talents and virtues. This frankness and decision did not a little contribute to the failure of the preposterous and disgraceful plot.

---

\* Through Mr. Pinet, &c.—These attempts failed.

CHAP.  
XIV.

---

1779

Thomas Jefferson is elected in his place.

June 1.

The virtues, abilities, and services of Thomas Jefferson, drew upon him the eyes of the Legislature, and he was elected Governor of Virginia. We have remarked his early and efficient attachment to the cause of America.— We have seen his name gloriously connected with the most important revolutionary transactions—especially, with the declaration of Independence. Yet, with so many claims to the gratitude and confidence of his country, Mr. Jefferson did not aspire to the eminence and pomp of office. Patriotic views alone could induce him to abstract himself from a more tranquil sphere of usefulness, in which the labours of the statesman were occasionally intermingled with the pursuits of the philosopher, and the pleasures of domestic retirement. But his country called, and he obeyed—modestly stepping into a career no less arduous than honourable—and relying on the wise counsels of the General Assembly, the aid of the principal executive agents, and the purity and zeal of his own bosom, for the successful discharge of his new duties. The patriotic and worthy John Page had shared with him the suffrages of the Legislature. The zeal of their respective friends alone, placed them in the situation of competitors. Their intimacy and friendship did not suffer from this involuntary rivalship. Their noble minds soared above the petty feelings of personal jealousy. Their common object was public usefulness: and the difference of numbers that decided between them was so small, that, even had their hearts been capable of unfriendly sentiments towards each other, it could give the one no pain, and the other no pleasure. The letters which passed between them on that subject are before our eyes. They bear the genuine stamp of lofty characters—of men determined to serve their country, no matter whether in the first or in the second rank.

## CHAPTER XV.

---

Order of the Governor and Council for the close confinement of Governor Hamilton and others—Effects of this order—Indian affairs—Sullivan chastises the Mohawks—Expedition of Broadhead against other tribes—Operations on the Eastern frontier—Sir Henry Clinton takes Stony-Point, and Fort Mifflin—Stony-Point is retaken by Gen. Wayne—Major Lee surprises Powleshook—Unsuccessful effort of Massachusetts—General Clinton withdraws all his force into New-York—Battle of Stono—D’Estaing appears on the coast of Georgia—Unsuccessful attack on Savannah—A French ship of war anchors in York river—Spain offers her mediation—Congress settle their ultimatum—Virginia ratifies the French alliance—State of the public mind in 1779—Spain accedes to the war—Irruption of Don Galvez into West-Florida—The Chevalier De La Luzerne succeeds Mr. Gerard—Virginia extends her Western establishments—The claim of Virginia to her Western lands, disputed—Remonstrance of the Virginia Legislature on the subject—Proceedings of the General Assembly at their October session—Encouragement of foreign commerce—Salaries of the Clergy entirely abolished.

SCARCELY had Thomas Jefferson entered upon the exercise of his functions, as Chief Magistrate of the Commonwealth, when public justice dictated to him and the Executive Council, an act of retaliatory severity. Early in June, the prisoners taken by Clarke at Fort St. Vincents, were, under a guard, brought to Williamsburg.—Among these, Henry Hamilton, who, for some years past, had acted as Lieutenant Governor of the settlement at Detroit, under Sir Guy Carleton, Philip Dejean, Justice of the Peace for Detroit, and William Lamothe, Captain of volunteers, were entitled to that distinction which attends pre-eminent guilt. Not only the concurring testimony of several persons, but proclamations under his own hand, proved that Governor Hamilton had excited the Indians to perpetrate their accustomed cruelties on the citizens of the United States, with an eagerness and activity, which clearly evinced that the general nature of the task perfectly harmonized with his particular disposition.—His barbarous treatment of the few Americans spared by his blood-hounds, and by him doomed to a captivity worse than

CHAP.  
XV.

---

1779

Order of the Governor and Council for the close confinement of Governor Hamilton and others.

June 16.



## CHAP.

## XV.

1779

death, or surrendered to the stake, marked him not only as a ferocious, implacable national enemy, but as a remorseless destroyer of the human race.—Of Dejean it was well ascertained that he had, on all occasions, been the willing and cordial instrument of the tyrannical, blood-thirsty Hamilton—goaded him even to greater atrocities—displaying, in his double capacity of Judge and Jailor, oppression in its most hideous shapes—Lamothe had, in several expeditions against the frontier settlements, commanded volunteer parties of scalping Indians and whites—ever foremost in the sanguinary task—and, by his example, stimulating rather than softening the murderous fury of his execrable hordes.—The Council had irrefragable proofs of all this. They had seen, too,\* that the conduct of the British officers, civil and military, had in its general tenor, through the whole course of the war, been savage and unprecedented among civilized nations; that American officers and soldiers, taken by them, had been loaded with irons, consigned to loathsome and crowded gaols, dungeons and prison-ships; supplied after with no food, generally with too little for the subsistence of nature, and that little sometimes unsound and unwholesome, so as to cause the death of multitudes: that they had been transported beyond seas, where their fate could not be ascertained, or compelled to take arms against their country, and by a new refinement in cruelty, to become the murderers of their own brethren.—On the other hand, British prisoners had been treated by the Americans with moderation and humanity; they had been furnished on all occasions with wholesome and plentiful food, lodged comfortably, suffered to go at large within extensive tracts of country, treated with liberal hospitality, permitted to live in American families, to labour for themselves, to acquire and enjoy property, and, indeed, to participate in the principal benefits of society, while privileged from all its burthens. Reviewing this contrast which could not be denied by the British themselves in a single point, and in which the enemy had so long persevered that no hope now remained of their being ever recalled to the practice of humanity by the moderation of the Americans; called on by the justice due to their own citizens, armed to fight the battles of their country, at length to deal out miseries to their enemies, measure for measure, and, after vainly endeavouring to introduce an emulation in kindness, to exhibit an impressive spectacle of severe retaliation; happily possessed, by the fortune of war, of some of those very individuals, who, having distinguished themselves personally in that line of cruel conduct, were fit subjects to begin on with the work

---

\* See in Remembrancer for 1779, the proceedings of the Executive Council on this occasion.

of retaliation, the Council resolved to advise the Governor, that Henry Hamilton, Philip Dejean, and William Lamothé, prisoners of war, should be put in irons, confined in the dungeon of the public jail, debarred of the use of pen, ink, and paper, and excluded from all conversation, except with their keeper. The Governor issued an order in conformity with this advice, and the prisoners were subjected to the treatment intended by the Council. Major General Phillips, who, at this time, occupied Col. Carter's house, near Charlottesville, having read in the Virginia Gazette the above mentioned order, immediately addressed the Governor on the subject. In his letter, he endeavours to invalidate the testimony against Hamilton, and to extenuate his guilt; he then expresses doubts respecting the authority of any particular state to enter upon retaliation, a matter which he supposes exclusively to belong to the Continental Congress; he next expatiates on the sacred nature of a capitulation, contending that Hamilton surrendered on the faith of an inviolable agreement of that kind; that, if guilty of the enormities laid to his charge, he might, indeed, have been excluded from the liberal terms of civilized warfare, by his victorious enemy; but that Col. Clarke having admitted him to a surrender, he was no longer liable to the severe punishment inflicted on him, whatever his previous conduct might have been. He, therefore, from motives of justice, and likewise with a view to avert the severities to which he foresees such a step will give rise, on both sides, in subsequent stages of the war, intreats the Governor to re-consider the subject. "From my residence in Virginia, he adds, I have conceived the most favourable idea of the Gentlemen of the country; and from my personal acquaintance with you, Sir, I am led to imagine it must have been very dissonant to the feelings of your mind to inflict such a weight of misery and stigma of disgrace upon the unfortunate Gentleman in question."\* Mr. Jefferson's idea was, that all persons taken in war were to be deemed prisoners of war: that those who surrendered on capitulation (or convention) were prisoners of war also, subject to the same treatment

July 5:

---

\* It is needless to remark that ideas of public duty, and a wish to inculcate on the enemy a practical lesson such as to recall him to humanity towards American prisoners by a regard for himself, actuated the Governor through the whole of this affair. We have seen his liberal conduct towards the troops of Convention. In the very letter under consideration, Phillips writes; "I am to return you my sincere thanks for your obliging declaration in favour of the troops of Convention. I dare say they will continue their good conduct, and make no doubt of their receiving every humane treatment from you, Sir, and the Executive of Virginia.—Your polite attentions to me claim my acknowledgments, and I shall be sorry my going to the warm springs may prevent my making them personally to you at Monticello."—We hope our readers will forgive our multiplied quotations. We love to find and paint the courtesies of social life, in the midst of national irritations and hostilities.



CHAP.  
XV.

1779

as those who surrendered at discretion, except only so far as they were guarded by the express terms of their capitulation or Convention. In the capitulation of Governor Hamilton,\* no stipulation was made as to the treatment of himself and those taken with him. The Governor, indeed, upon signing, had added a flourish of reasons which induced him to capitulate, one of which was the generosity of his enemy. Generosity on a large and comprehensive scale seemed to require that a signal example should be made of that Gentleman; but, independently of such a view, the reasons thus assigned, were only the private motives that induced him to surrender, and did not, from the very face of the instrument, enter into the contract of Col. Clarke. Mr. Jefferson, therefore, did not think Hamilton privileged from confinement by the bare existence of a capitulation, there being in that contract no positive article to that effect. However, the importance of such a point in a public view, and his anxiety under a charge of violated faith by the Executive of Virginia, induced him to consult the Commander in Chief. The question was simple. Governor Hamilton was imprisoned for acts, any one of which was sufficient to justify the measure. The rigour exercised against him, then, could give the enemy no right to inflict new severities on American prisoners, and all such severities were to be considered, not as retaliatory but as original and unprovoked. And should the enemy deem the causes of that rigour unfounded on truth, or consider the capitulation as sufficient to protect Hamilton and his companions against the treatment inflicted on them, an appeal might be made by proper authorities to the candour, justice, and reason of the Americans. General Washington was not insensible of this; he saw with pleasure the Executive of his native State, enter with becoming firmness, upon a course of measures which the enemy's conduct had rendered necessary; yet, as the determinations of that enemy had hitherto been most successfully prognosticated by reversing the conclusions of calm and dispassionate reasoning, he foresaw that the order of the Governor and Council, if persisted in, would be perverted into a contest of cruelty and destruction; his respect for the laws and usages of civilized nations corresponded with the ideas of Mr. Jefferson on the subject, and he entertained some doubts as to the real bearing and extent of the capitulation. A solemn inculcation had been administered; Virginia had it in her power to repeat it. This alone might have a proper effect. General Washington, therefore, recommended lenient proceedings; and the Governor and Council, not only influenced by his advice, but at no time unmindful of the circumstances attending

---

\* See that capitulation in the Remembrancer for 1779.



CHAP.  
XV.

1779

Sept'r. 29.

the confinement of the above named prisoners, wishing and willing to expect that their sufferings might lead them to the practice of humanity, should any future event again submit to their discretion the fate of their fellow creatures ; that the example of their punishment might deter others from the perpetration of similar cruelties, and induce the enemy to reflect on the painful consequences of a continuation of their harsh measures against American captives, while such multiplied subjects of retaliation were in the hands of the other party ; sensible that the great cause which had armed the two nations, against each other, could be decided only by the exercise of honourable valour in the field ; earnestly hoping that the enemy, content to abide the event of that mode of decision, would spare them a second departure from kindness towards prisoners ; and confident that their motives would be duly appreciated by the wise and virtuous part of mankind, adopted the measure of sending Hamilton, Dejean, and Lamothe, together with Major Hay, to Hanover Court House, there to remain at large within certain reasonable limits, their parole being taken in the usual manner. A parole was accordingly drawn up and tendered to the prisoners : it required them to be inoffensive in word as well as deed. To this clause, they objected, insisting on entire freedom of speech. They were, consequently, remanded to their confinement, which was now to be considered as voluntary. Their irons, however, were taken off. Some of the prisoners soon after subscribed the tendered parole, and were enlarged. Hamilton, aspiring to the fame of a martyr in the royal cause, and hoping that his magnified distresses would be amply remunerated by future promotion, long refused to do the same. Upon being informed by General Phillips, who had been exchanged, and was now in New York, that his sufferings would be perfectly gratuitous, he complied, at last, and was sent, under escort, to the destined place ; and afterwards to Winchester.

Effects of  
this order.

October 2.

These measures of the Executive of Virginia produced the effects which had been anticipated. At first, the British used what they improperly termed, in such a case, retaliation. Captain Willing whom they charged with having exercised great cruelties at the Natchez, was confined in irons—but soon after released.—A declaration was issued that no officers of the Virginia line should be exchanged till Hamilton's affair should be satisfactorily settled.—When information of this was received, the order for enlarging on parole Hamilton and his fellow prisoners, had been given, and as Captain Willing had been released, it was not recalled. Nor, indeed, should his confinement have been made a cause of complaint, had the charge against him originated in truth. The Governor of Virginia was ready to exercise all the powers vested in him, for the

CHAP.  
XV.

1779

October 3.

punishment of any officer guilty of excesses unjustifiable under the usage of civilized nations.—But the Executive were not to be terrified into an acquiescence under every insult and cruelty the enemy might chuse to practice, and into a fear to retaliate lest their own country-men should be made to experience additional sufferings. The British officers and soldiers in their hands were pledges for the safety of Virginian prisoners; and it was determined to use them as such. A vessel loaded with privates for New-York, on exchange, was immediately stopped—and the Governor advised by the council to take proper and effectual measures for ascertaining from time to time the situation and treatment of Virginian prisoners with the enemy, and to extend to theirs within the Commonwealth alike treatment in every circumstance. The prison-ship, fitted up on the recommendation of Congress, was ordered to a proper station, for the reception and confinement of such prisoners as should be sent to it.—“ I am afraid, the Governor writes to General Washington, I shall hereafter perhaps be obliged to give your Excellency some trouble in aiding me to obtain information of the future usage of our prisoners. I shall give immediate orders for having in readiness every engine which the enemy have contrived for the destruction of our unhappy citizens, captivated by them. The presentiment of these operations is shocking beyond expression. I pray Heaven to avert them; but nothing in this world will do with such an enemy but proper firmness and decision!” The Governor and Council deeply sympathized with such of their country-men as might, in consequence of the present determination, be cut off from the society of their friends and dearest connections, while the Executive seemed to have it in their power to administer relief: but they trusted to their good sense for discerning, and to their spirit for bearing up against the fallacy of this appearance. A letter, on this important subject, was addressed by the Governor to Colonel Mathews, an officer of the Virginia line, then a prisoner on parole, but obligated to return to New-York. It explained the motives of the conduct pursued by the Executive—the beneficial tendency of that conduct in favour of American prisoners, whom a proper system of retaliation must ultimately relieve—it concluded in the following words: “ I beg you to be assured there is nothing consistent with the honour of your country, which we shall not, at all times, be ready to do for the relief of yourself and companions in captivity. We know that ardent spirit and hatred for tyranny, which brought you into your present situation, will enable you to bear against it with the firmness which has distinguished you as a soldier, and to look forward with pleasure to the day when events shall take place, against which the



"wounded pride of your enemies will find no comfort even from reflections on the most refined of the cruelties with which they have glutted themselves."—Upon the whole, this practical inculcation was not lost on the British; it enlisted self-interest in the cause of humanity.

CHAP.  
XV.

1779

Indian af-  
fairs.

June 12.

The intelligence of Colonel Clark's success had been received by the General Assembly with joy and applause. To him an elegant sword had been voted; and to Lieutenant Rogers, an active and distinguished officer, who had conspicuously promoted the expedition against Fort St. Vincents, a liberal donative in money.—Another blow was, about the same time inflicted by Colonel Shelby on the seceding Cherokees. Penetrating into the country of those restless foresters, Shelby destroyed eleven of their settlements, and twenty thousand bushels of corn, collected probably for the expedition to be concerted by Hamilton and the various tribes, in the council which they had intended to hold at the mouth of the Tennessee. He also took as many goods as sold for twenty five thousand pounds. A few Indians only fell during this expedition: but the Chiefs of Chuccamoga, and the great warrior of Chote were recalled to a pacific disposition. They discharged from among them all the white people and traders, who came from Mobile, or had any connection with the British party. Colonel Bowman had advanced into the Shawnee country with three hundred men, and was spreading there the terror of the American arms. The brave Clarke continued in the Illinois country; keeping in awe the hostile tribes, and improving by a mild policy the friendly disposition of such as were well effected towards the United States. He knew that a storm was gathering against him at Detroit, but his intention was, if reinforced to give the enemy a shorter distance to come and fight him. Nor was the Governor unmindful of the Western Frontier. The new levies from the counties, in that section of the State, were ordered to enter the ninth regiment at Pittsburg. Their aid might be there immediate and important; and, if marched to the Southward, they would arrive too late for any efficient purpose, during the present campaign.—It was intended speedily to reinforce Colonel Clarke, whose enterprising genius meditated a blow not only against Detroit, but against Pensacola. The activity of that useful officer was much shackled by the effects of depreciation. During his absence from Kaskaskias, numbers of traders had flocked there, out bidding each other, and giving such prices for all transferable articles, that the Inhabitants conceived the paper bills to be of no value. Clarke could procure provisions only in exchange for goods, or upon his own bonds. He was sometimes compelled to use force, a method repugnant to his feelings, and to his ideas of justice. Several merchants at Kaskas-



CHAP.  
XV.

1779

kias, and New Orleans, and particularly Mr. Oliver Pollock, advanced considerable sums, in aid of the American service. Whilst paid for in gold or silver, every thing had been extremely cheap in the Illinois country—and Colonel Clarke urged a deposit of specie at New Orleans for the payment of the expences of government in the West. This alone, he thought, could enable him to execute his bold and extensive plans. At their ensuing session, the Legislature directed the Governor to establish such a deposit.

Other blows were, this year, inflicted on the Indians, and their tory associates—the inefficacy of partial victories over them, had been evinced by the vindictive and too often successful incursions of those who had escaped. The hydra had many heads; to destroy it, required herculean efforts. The United States had in vain endeavoured to cherish neutrality among the savages: the excitements of British emissaries had armed their hands: no security could be expected on the Western frontier, without some extraordinary and ruinous catastrophe, capable of striking salutary terror and caution even into the stubborn and infuriated minds of these ruthless foresters. For this purpose Sullivan,\* at the head of a considerable body of Continental troops, advanced into the country lying between the westernmost settlements of Pennsylvania and New York, and the great Lakes. That extensive and fertile tract was inhabited by the Six Nations, who from a long intercourse with the whites had derived some of the primary arts of civilized life, together with a partiality for the British, whose traders and emissaries had liberally supplied their wants, and thus secured their alliance. By the accession of a corps under the American General Clinton, Sullivan's force was augmented to about five thousand men. The Indians, although they displayed great intrepidity and skill, and although they counted, among their leaders, Brandt, Butler, Johnston, and McDonald, were driven from a strong position judiciously assumed; and abandoned their country to the ravages of the victor. The object of the expedition was incompatible with mercy. It was to create a vast solitude between the Indians and the Western frontier of the Union. Accordingly though no more than eleven Indians were slain, the whole country was made a desolate waste. Every vestige of human industry was obliterated from its surface. A severe but necessary retribution!—In the mean time Colonel Broadhead ascended the Alleghany from Pittsburg, with six hundred men, and advancing upwards of two hundred miles, destroyed several settlements of the Mungo, Munsey, and

Sullivan  
chastises  
the Mo-  
hawks.

August 29.

Expedition  
of Broad-  
head against  
other tribes.

\* The details of the expedition, proves that General not to have been well-fitted for Indian warfare—to say nothing of his equipage and provisions.

CHAP.  
XV.

1779

Seneca tribes.—But the focus of Indian hostility was at Detroit. Thence issued the spark which electrified, wide and far, so many unrelenting spirits. Unfortunately, neither Sullivan, nor Broadhead, was prepared to strike that distant post, already menaced by Clarke. Yet, by the present chastisement the Indians were considerably intimidated; and never afterwards did the American borders experience those horrid and extensive calamities in which they had hitherto been occasionally involved.

On the Eastern frontier, no operations of a decisive character marked the present campaign. Superiority of numbers, the advantage of a powerful fleet, and, consequently, the perfect command of the water, on the side of the British, compelled General Washington to confine himself to a defensive plan, the primary object of which was the protection of the North river. Since the destruction of Forts Clinton and Montgomery, in 1777, a position still better adapted than the site on which these once stood to the command of the Hudson, had been selected, and its natural strength increased with unremitting industry. That position known by the name of West Point, lay embosomed among hills and precipices, some miles above Verplank's Neck and Stoney-Point, two posts protecting King's Ferry, by which a communication was opened between the Eastern and the Middle States. The possession of this ferry was of extreme importance to the Americans; to the British it likewise offered great advantages. Immediately upon the return of General Mathew and Sir George Collier from Virginia to New-York, Sir Henry Clinton proceeded with them up the Hudson, and the superiority of his numbers, combined with naval means of attack, soon placed Stoney Point and Verplank's Neck in his power. After completing the fortifications at these posts, Sir Henry, finding the other American positions unassailable, returned to New-York with the fleet, leaving the works at King's Ferry strongly garrisoned. Bent on the execution of his predatory and harrassing plan, he soon after projected against the exposed margin of Connecticut, an expedition similar in its objects and in its mode, to that lately directed against Virginia. Sir George Collier again presided over the naval part of the enterprize. The land forces, about two thousand five hundred strong, were placed under the command of Gov. Tryon, who held, in the British army, the rank of Major-General. A landing was effected in two divisions, and New-Haven\* easily became the prey of the

Operations  
on the East-  
ern frontier.

Sir Henry  
Clinton  
takes Sto-  
ney-Point,  
and Fort  
Payette.

May 30.

July 5.

\* See Gordon, Ramsay, and others. At New-Haven, an aged citizen who laboured under a natural inability of speech, had his tongue cut off by one of the royal army. Yet, some British historians have attempted to vindicate those wanton inflictions!!

CHAP.  
XV.

1779

Stoney-  
Point is re-  
taken by  
General  
Wayne

July 15,

invaders. It is needless to particularize the circumstances of their conduct. Every enormity, except that of burning the houses, was perpetrated. Soon conflagration was added to the dire list. Fairfield, East-Haven, Norwalk, and the Green Farms were reduced to ashes. Indiscriminate plunder, and wanton violence marked the steps of the restorers of regular government. A descent at New London was the ultimate object of the expedition, but that place was saved from the signal severities in reserve for it, by an event no less honourable to the Americans, than mortifying to the enemy. On the night of the 15th of July, Stoney Point was retaken by a chosen corps, under General Wayne. The annals of the revolutionary war present indeed, more important achievements, but they will not transmit to posterity a more brilliant action, than the present reduction of that post. The Fort scarcely more accessible by nature than Quebec itself, was rendered more difficult of approach by abatis, and other military obstructions. If the ardor of the assailants could have been damped by human means, the deep morass and strong works in front and flank, which they had to pass and subdue, would have furnished a reasonable excuse. But volunteers alone being admitted into this dangerous enterprize, they marched up with firmness in the face of a galling fire of musquetry, and a twenty-four pounder loaded with grape shot. The business was done by the bayonet only; for, although the party sent to amuse the garrison, was directed to keep up an incessant fire, the two columns to whom the real attack was assigned, mastered the works without a single discharge of their pieces. What could veterans do more than to put their whole confidence in cold steel? Indeed, the van consisted of one hundred and fifty, who advanced with unloaded muskets. The names of Wayne, Fleury, Posey, Stewart, Gibbon, Archer, and Knox, shone conspicuous in that affair. National gratitude rewarded both officers and men. Humanity too, adorned this triumph; although by the laws of war the assailants would have been justified in putting the garrison to the sword, not a single individual was injured after resistance had ceased.\* It had been contemplated to regain also possession of the Fort on Verplank's Neck; a series of unlucky errors in the communication of orders, and other preparatory measures, rendered this part of the plan abortive. Washington had judiciously determined to sacrifice all secondary objects to the preservation of the important post at West Point. His present numbers did not

And abandoned.

\* Americans. Wounded, 1 Lieutenant Colonel, 2 Captains, 3 Lieutenants, 10 Serjeants, 3 Corporals, 64 Privates. Killed, 2 Serjeants, 13 Privates.

British. Wounded, 43. Killed, 63. Prisoners, 441. The stores considerable—appraised, and the value divided among the victorious soldiers, according to the promise of General Washington.



CHAP.  
XV.

1779

permit him to furnish Stoney Point with an adequate garrison ; and Clinton was advancing at the head of a formidable body. That post, therefore, was abandoned by the Americans, after removing the artillery and stores, and destroying the works. With the main army, the Commander in Chief occupied West Point, and the neighbouring passes ; whilst General Howe, stationed at Ridgefield, covered Connecticut ; and Lord Sterling, with the division under his command, advanced, on the West side of the river, to the borders of New Jersey. The vicinity of the two armies gave rise to a multiplicity of incidents, which, though not extensive in their effects, were glorious to the American arms. One of these originated in a Virginian officer, whose activity, bravery and skill, we have already had occasion to remark. With three hundred men, Major Lee surprized the British garrison at Powles Hook, and with the loss of only two killed, and three wounded, made one hundred and fifty nine prisoners, including some officers. Major Sutherland, the Commander of the garrison, escaped by throwing himself into a strong redoubt with fifty Hessians. The alarm was now given at New-York. Immediate retreat became necessary. To secure his party, and prisoners, was the duty of the successful partisan, this he performed with rapidity and judgment. The thanks of Congress, and the applause of General Washington, remunerated him and his brave comrades. In this, and other rencounters, almost in contact with the barbarities which Virginia and Connecticut still bewailed, the humanity and moderation of the Americans, conveyed to the enemy a noble and affecting reproach.

Major Lee  
surprises  
the British  
garrison at  
Powles  
Hook.

July 19.

The Americans were not equally successful in an attempt to dislodge the enemy from Penobscot, where Gen. Maclean from Halifax, had taken a strong position with 650 men. The State of Massachusetts detached a body of militia under General Lovell, and an armed naval force directed by Commodore Saltonstall, for the purpose of obstructing or destroying Maclean's settlement. This armament reached Penobscot bay, on the 25th of July, and the troops landed on the 28th. A battery was erected, and its fire directed against the enemy's Fort for near a fortnight, but without much effect. An assault had been determined upon, and was to have been made on the 13th of August, when Sir George Collier entered the Bay, with a strong squadron. Alarmed at his approach, and unable to resist with success his superior force, the Americans retired up the river—Collier pursued them, and took or destroyed the whole of their shipping. The militia and seamen had to explore their route back through thick woods, and suffered considerable hardships. This was a severe blow on the honour, as well as interest, of Massachusetts. Her privateers were, before this unfortunate event, numerous,

Unsuccess-  
ful effort of  
Massachu-  
setts.

June.

July 25.

August 13.

CHAP.  
XV.

able and active, and greatly annoyed the enemy. Congress partly indemnified her for the expence of that unsuccessful expedition, although it had been undertaken without their concurrence.

1779

Gen. Clinton with-  
draws all his  
forces into  
New York.

About this time, Admiral Arbuthnot arrived at New York, with large reinforcements, and superseded Collier in the command of the fleet. Lord Cornwallis embarked with a strong detachment for Georgia and South Carolina, but returned shortly after, in consequence of information which he received on his route, that Count D'Estaing had just arrived on the Southern coast, with a powerful fleet. This intelligence alarmed Sir Henry for New York. He began to apprehend a combined attack of the French by sea, and the Americans by land. Under this apprehension, he hastened to evacuate Rhode Island, and the ports up the North river, in short, to concentrate his whole force in New York, which he laboured to put in a state of defence proportionate to the magnitude of the expected danger.—Thus was the campaign of 1779, along the Eastern frontier confined to a war of posts : Washington undeviatingly adhered to his plan for the protection of the American *Thermopylae*, and his reputation for defensive ability, derived additional lustre from the caution and prudence which he opposed to the attempts of the enemy to draw him from his impregnable position.

Battle of  
Stono.

June 20.

We have left in the South, General Prevost on John's Island, and General Lincoln in Dorchester. John's Island is separated from the Main by the Stono inlet. Prevost had left at the ferry on the Main, a corps of one thousand five hundred men, and erected three redoubts in front of this position. Lincoln moved towards it, early in June, with a view to strike the enemy. An immediate assault, however, appeared hazardous : but some changes in the enemy's situation, induced Lincoln to attack the British post, now commanded by Col. Maitland, on the 20th. General Moultrie had been directed to pass into James' Island with a detachment from Charleston, for the purpose of diverting the attention of the British General, and preventing him from conveying any succour to the corps at which the blow was really aimed. This feint was ill executed ; and Prevost thus enabled to assist Maitland, who had commenced a vigorous resistance. Besides, the attack was unfortunately directed against the strongest point of the enemy's defences ; and the American troops, though ordered to reserve their fire, and trust to the bayonet, halted to return the fire of the enemy, and thus deranged the whole plan of assault. A retreat was the consequence ; and Lincoln, though well pleased with the alacrity and bravery of his troops, among which was the Auxiliary detachment from Virginia, had the mortification of leaving the enemy master of the ground.—The loss was nearly



CHAP.  
XV.

1779

equal on both sides\*—The death of the heroic Colonel Roberts of the artillery, left deep regrets to the Americans. The deranging breach of orders was atoned for, in some measure, by subsequent intrepidity and zeal.—But the golden moment had elapsed.

The sultry months of July and August necessarily were a period of inaction, in that climate. The British General withdrew his forces from John's Island and the Main, and by water retired to Savannah, leaving, however, Colonel Maitland at Beaufort, in Port Royal Island, with a considerable garrison. The American militia retired to their homes; and General Lincoln, at the head of his Continentals, took post at Sheldon, a salubrious seite in the vicinity of Beaufort.

Count D'Estaing, while actively and successfully employed in the West Indies, received information from Governor Rutledge, Gen. Lincoln, and Mr. Plombard, the French Consul at Charleston, of the situation of the Southern States. A visit to this part of the coast, by such a fleet as that under his command, as soon as the hurricane months should interrupt naval operations in the West Indies, seemed to promise fame to himself, destruction to the enemy, and relief to America. D'Estaing instantly closed with the appeal; and, on the first of September, appeared on the coast of Georgia, with a large fleet, and about six thousand troops. A British 50 gun ship, and three frigates fell a prey to his superior force. A joint attack upon Savannah was quickly concerted: with correspondent promptitude the British prepared for defence; Maitland was recalled from Beaufort, and, on his route to Savannah, when, before the arrival of Lincoln, Count D'Estaing demanded the surrender of that town. Prevost requested time to deliberate, and this was inconsiderately granted. Maitland, himself a host, entered the threatened place in the interval. He breathed his own spirit into the garrison, and resistance was resolved upon. A storm, or a siege, therefore, became inevitable. The latter was preferred. On both sides great activity was displayed. Nine mortars, and thirty-seven pieces of cannon from the land side, and fifteen from the water, opened upon Savannah. The slowness of regular approaches little harmonized with D'Estaing's impetuous valour, much too, was feared from the fury of the elements, at this tempestuous season, or from the possible approach of a British naval armament, superior in strength. An assault, then, was finally planned. Brave as the execution was, it failed of success. Two columns, one led by Dillon, the other by D'Estaing and Lincoln, advanced against the enemy's right—the first missed its route

D'Estaing  
appears on  
the coast of  
Georgia.

Sept'r. 1.

Oct'r. 4.

Unsuccess-  
ful attack  
on Savan-  
nah.  
October 9.

\* Killed and wounded, about 160.



**CHAP.** in the darkness of a foggy morning—the second, through a  
**XV.** tremendous fire, advanced unappalled—already the stand-  
 ————— pet, when Prevost's reserve, headed by Maitland, rushed  
 1779 against the exulting victors, and drove them back, with ir-  
 resistible vehemence. At this perilous moment, the daunt-  
 less Pulaski, with two hundred horse, attempted to throw  
 himself into the enemy's rear. He fell, mortally wounded.\*  
 —The allied Generals retired, repulsed, but not disgraced.  
 Their own intrepidity, and the emulous bravery of their  
 troops, were worthy of a better fortune. D'Estaing was  
 wounded, but slightly. Major Fontange, and several o-  
 ther officers, experienced a similar fate. During the at-  
 tack on the British right, the country militia, to divide the  
 enemy's force, threatened the centre. On the side of the  
 allies, the loss was considerable. The protection of well  
 constructed defences, rendered that of the besieged com-  
 paratively small.† The gallantry of the garrison has been  
 justly praised. Maitland deserves peculiar admiration.  
 He fell, a few days after, a victim to the insalubrity of the  
 climate. The siege was raised—and the allied armies,  
 having witnessed each others zeal and courage, and ac-  
 quitting each other of any intentional share in this disas-  
 trous result, separated in perfect harmony.

A French  
 ship of war  
 anchors in  
 York River.

The apprehensions of stormy weather which had acce-  
 lerated the departure of the French Admiral, were not  
 groundless. Scarcely had the troops embarked, when a  
 violent tempest arose, and dispersed the whole fleet. D'Es-  
 taing had ordered seven of his ships to repair to Hamp-  
 ton Road, in the Chesapeake. One only, the *Fendant*, com-  
 manded by the Marquis De Vandreuil, was able to reach  
 that station, and moved up York River. From the Go-  
 vernor and other distinguished characters, De Vandreuil,  
 experienced the most delicate attention, and the wants  
 of his ship were cheerfully supplied.

Thus was D'Estaing again frustrated in the primary  
 object of his co-operation. Yet, even this unsuccessful effort  
 was of great advantage to the common cause. It inter-  
 rupted the present operations of the enemy, and distracted

---

\* When the King of Poland was apprized of Pulaski's death, he observ-  
 ed: "Pulaski died, as he lived—a hero—but the implacable enemy of  
 Kings."

† Killed and wounded. French, 637. Americans, 200. British, 120.  
 Much has been said respecting the summons by D'Estaing to the town, to  
 surrender to the arms of France. "The true reason, observes Ramsay,  
 was that the American army had not then come up. It would have been  
 therefore, absurd for a French officer to demand the surrender in the  
 name of an absent commander." As to the refusal of permission to send  
 the women and children out of the town, it arose from a suspicion that,  
 under the specious veil of humanity, Prevost wished to secrete the plun-  
 der lately taken from the inhabitants of South Carolina.

their views for the future. Clinton, shut up in New-York, wasted the remainder of the Campaign in fortifying himself against imaginary dangers. Cornwallis was precluded from effecting an intended expedition. The appearance of De Vandreuil in the Chesapeake held the foe in anxious doubt. It is true that the gloom now spread over the South was proportionate to the refulgence of anterior hopes : but, perhaps, even this was beneficial. The reduction of Savannah, though desirable, would not have had a decisive influence on the issue of the war. It would have increased that langour into which multiplied causes had betrayed America. Too much had been expected from the effects of the alliance. The safety, the triumph of the union must chiefly depend on internal energy. To call this forth, great excitements had again become necessary, and they were to arise from the dangers of the South. An idea had sprung up that the termination of the contest was at hand—that idea had been encouraged, cherished, even in the bosom of the great national Council—and it had a fatal tendency to relax the sinews of the war.—It was time that the delusion should entirely cease.

Spain had offered to the belligerents a mediation, which had been cheerfully accepted by France, but to which G. Britain had returned only an evasive answer, satisfied with expressing an indefinite wish for peace. A suspension of hostilities for a fixed period was proposed by the mediating power ; a Congress of deputies from the respective belligerents was to assemble at Madrid. The independence of the U. States was to be acknowledged, if not formally, at least, virtually.—During this negociation, which was protracted to a considerable length, the machiavelism of the British Cabinet, was actively exerted. The Ministers at the same time, endeavoured to conclude a separate arrangement with France, in order to crush America with greater ease, or to effect an accommodation with the United States, for the purpose of humbling more effectually the house of Bourbon. Then it was that British Emissaries secretly nursed in the bosom of the States, suspicion and jealousy against France, endeavouring to revive ancient and disgraceful prejudices, calling the alliance unnatural, impolitic, pernicious. It was then that influential men, leaning towards a separate peace, endeavored to revive, throughout the States, those Committees, which had been instrumental in bringing about their Independence, and which now would have placed again the government in the hands of the people, the better to conduct them to some favorite object—which was thought to be an alliance with Great Britain. The Ministers, adjourning their resentment and their vengeance, were willing to patch up an *Independent* peace with America, at the expence of her public faith and future salvation. These Committees, whatever might be their os-

CHAP.  
XV.

1779

Spain offers  
her mediation.

Congress  
settle their  
ultimatum.



CHAP.  
XV.

1779

Virginia ratifies the French alliance.

June 2.

tensible purposes, were to give the impulse, and improve its effects into a separate accommodation.—Virginia nobly counteracted whatever she deemed calculated to destroy, or even enfeeble the alliance. On the 2d day of June, her Legislature passed the following resolutions :

“ *Resolved*, NEMINE CONTRADICENTE, That it is the opinion of this Assembly, that the treaties of alliance and commerce between his Most Christian Majesty of France on the one part, and the Congress of the United States of America, on behalf of the said States, on the other part, ought to be ratified and confirmed, and the same are accordingly hereby ratified, confirmed, and declared binding on this Commonwealth.”

“ *RESOLVED*, That the Governor be desired to notify to the Minister of his Most Christian Majesty, resident at Philadelphia, the above ratification, under the seal of the Commonwealth.”

This ratification, though censured by some as contrary to the spirit of the confederation, had a salutary effect. It proved that the national faith had strong supporters ; and it greatly contributed to crush, in their very birth, those secret combinations which were forming to break the alliance, and throw America into the arms of Great Britain, upon her acknowledging the Independence of the States.—

All American Historians have deplored those transient clouds of party-dissention, of local or personal interest, which in the present year, occasionally obscured the lustre of the great national Council. Most of the illustrious characters who had given to Congress, in 1776, that elevated dignity of thought, sentiment and action, which had astonished the world, were now employed either in foreign missions, or in the highest offices of the new Governments, in their native States. It would have been difficult for any country, twice to present, in different individuals, such a collection of wisdom and moral greatness. The present Congress listened with too much indulgence to the recriminations of diplomatic or commercial agents, scandalously accusing each other—and afterwards circumstances occurred, obviously calculated to call forth clashing interests, and opposite views. During the Spanish negotiation to reconcile the belligerents, a question of the first magnitude was proposed to the General Congress—on what terms would they make peace? Both Mr. Gerard, the French Plenipotentiary, and Mr. Arthur Lee, one of the American agents in Europe, pressed this important question on the Representatives of United America. And, surely, the multiplied and complex considerations which it involved had a strong tendency to impair that harmony which common dangers had produced and maintained. The acknowledgment of Independence by Great Britain, the Newfoundland fisheries, the adjustment of boundaries

State of the public mind in 1779.



on the North and the West, the free navigation of the Mississippi, and some other points, well might occasion delays, and differences of opinions, and ultimate claims, not only between France and America, but between the States themselves. The discussion of the terms finally to be proposed employed Congress from February till August; and this deliberative slowness, together with manifestations of sentiments and views which he deemed hostile to the spirit of the alliance, and to the success of the contemplated negotiations, gave to Mr. Gerard considerable uneasiness. The fisheries, from a share in which it was apprehended France wished to exclude America, were vitally important to the New-England States; on the fisheries these states depended for the most valuable part of their foreign trade. Whilst the Southern and the Middle States had, in their indigo, rice, tobacco, maize, hemp, and flour, commanding articles of export, the Eastern States scarcely derived from their soil even bread for the support of their population. Aware of this, they wished to improve the advantages of the sea, and to establish their right to the Newfoundland fishery on a secure footing. To the rest of the Union, the fisheries presented the advantage of being a nursery of hardy and active seamen for a future national navy—and, in many other respects, a source of general wealth, security, and strength. On the other hand, the Southern States could not consent to relinquish the lands lying along the Eastern side of the Mississippi, and their claim to the free navigation of the Mississippi, in favour of Spain. With such data, an immediate agreement in relation to the desired ultimatum, was obviously impossible. A conflict of particular interests took place, in which the several parties respectively maintained their ground with pertinacity and warmth. The terms finally agreed upon, did not essentially differ from those obtained afterwards by the treaty of peace.

The Spanish mediation, however, proved ineffectual.—The British Ministers having found their efforts to detach the Allies from each other, entirely unavailing, persisted in a ruinous scheme of continued and extended war. The proposition to treat with the United States as an Independent Power, was rejected; and the Marquis D'Almodovar, the Spanish Minister at London, announced, upon this, the hostile intentions of his Court—stating, in the rescript which he then presented, injuries wantonly accumulated—a haughty refusal of redress—in short, “the absolute necessity on the part of His Catholic Majesty, of using all the means intrusted to him by the Almighty, to obtain that justice which he had solicited without effect.” The Spanish government had already been active in making naval and other preparations, nor was this accession of hos-

Spain accedes to the war.

June 16.

CHAP.  
XV.

1779

tility unexpected to Great-Britain. She had, in the Spring, reinforced and plentifully supplied Gibraltar. She now issued Letters of Marque and Reprisal against the Spaniards, but she could not prevent the junction of the Allied fleets—for a few weeks, these rode triumphant in the British Channel, insulted Plymouth, and threatened England and Ireland. The perilous situation into which the Ministers had thus plunged the Empire, drew upon them censure more vehement than had hitherto assailed them. Lord North tottered on his “bad eminence;” the influence of the Court, however, baffled the efforts of the opposition; and the political vessel of Britain continued under the guidance of those infatuated Pilots, who, amid those tempests which they had themselves raised, seemed to steer without Chart or Compass. At the ensuing Session, a suspicion of treachery was added to the charge of folly and ignorance. Ireland, in arms against contingent invasion, demanded and obtained a free trade.

Irruption of  
Don Galvez  
into West  
Florida.

Spain, notwithstanding her last decisive step, did not recognize the Independence of the United States; nor was their Minister at the Court of Madrid accredited.\* It was intended that a concession of Territory on the East side of the Mississippi, and the exclusive navigation of that river, should be the price of that acknowledgment.

The Governor of Louisiana, Don Galvez, early informed that his Catholic Majesty had become a party in the war, seized on all the British posts on the East side of the Mississippi.

Such were the causes which concurred to lull the people into fatal slumbers. The alliance with the French Monarch—an erroneous idea that the resources of the enemy were exhausted—the Spanish mediation—and the call on Congress by the Minister of France to give their ultimate terms for a peace. Then the accession of Spain to the war, which rendered the situation of Great-Britain so embarrassed and so critical, that her downfall was confidently anticipated. America, under the lassitude produced by

---

\* The following diplomatic appointments took place in consequence of the novel occurrences above mentioned:

John Jay—to negotiate a treaty of amity and commerce with the Cabinet of Madrid, and solicit a loan of five millions of dollars.

John Adams—(who had gone to Europe, but after Dr. Franklin was appointed sole Minister near the Court of Versailles, returned with the Chevalier De La Luzerne) to negotiate a treaty of peace and commerce with Great-Britain.

Henry Laurens—to negotiate a loan in Holland—and, if practicable, realize a project of a treaty of amity and commerce, before agreed to by A. Lee, &c.

Gerard retired, not in disgust, as the common enemy published, but on account of bad health. De La Luzerne was received with great respect in America. The Chevalier D'Anmours was about this time named French Consul for Virginia.

four years of violent and unremitted exertions, easily yielded to so many soporific influences. Delusive dreams accompanied this momentary toapor. There was, in an agricultural and commercial country, an almost irresistible gravitation towards domestic ease and tranquillity. Great dangers, great interests, powerful excitements, had alone roused the people to arms—we will see these return, and with them the glorious enthusiasm of 1776. The founders of the Republic still watch over its destinies; they still feel in their own bosoms the sacred flame of patriotism and virtue; and again they will breathe it into the hearts of their countrymen. The pressure of calamity will give new vigor to the elastic minds of freemen.

Mr. Gerard, whose impaired health required repose, returned to Europe. He was succeeded by the Chevalier De La Luzerne, whose abilities as a negociator, had been conspicuously displayed in Bavaria. In Boston, where he landed, in the American camp, in Philadelphia, that gentleman received every mark of respect which his public and private character invited, and which a brave, polite, and hospitable people could bestow.

When, upon the mediation of Spain, sanguine hopes of approaching peace were entertained, and the adjustment of boundaries upon the principle of *uti possidetis* was spoken of, the Governor of Virginia, with a view to secure on that principle, by actual possession, the right of Virginia, in its whole extent to the Mississippi, sent proper persons, under an escort, to ascertain by celestial observation, the point on that river intersected by the latitude of thirty-six and an half degrees, the Southern limit of the State; and to measure its distance from the mouth of the Ohio. Col. Clarke was directed, as soon as this should be done, to select a strong and commanding position on the river, near the Southern limit, and there to establish a Fort and garrison; in the mean time, to advance his establishments towards the Lakes, erecting Forts at different points, which might be an actual possession, as well as protection of that portion of the country also. Under these orders, Fort Jefferson, on the Mississippi, a few miles above the Southern limit, was erected and garrisoned. This measure gave great umbrage to the Chickasaws, a friendly and faithful tribe of Indians, who claimed these as their hunting grounds; but full explanations being given of the object of the measure, and of its necessity, as well for their own security, as for that of Virginia, they became satisfied; insomuch that when the Fort and garrison were afterwards beleaguered by hostile Indians, the Chickasaws came to their relief, and drove off the besieging force. The place was afterwards restored to the Chickasaws; and is still held by them. In the Northern quarter, Clarke proceeded with his usual judgment, combining policy with enterprize, en-

CHAP.  
XV.

1779

The Chevalier De La Luzerne succeeds Mr. Gerard.

Virginia extends her Western establishments.



CHAP.  
XV.

1779

couraging peace among the friendly tribes, and directing against the hostile, the force of those who could not be persuaded to remain inactive. It was thus that the Kikapooos were successfully armed against other tribes, such as the Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Shawnese. Had Clarke been placed by circumstances on a more extensive and more brilliant theatre, his genius and activity could not fail to have given him a distinguished rank among the greatest military characters, in ancient or modern times. Most of his achievements have been lost in the obscurity of the wilds where they were performed, because, in those busy, perilous scenes, every one was eager to act, and none had inclination or leisure to record what was done. With us, and with all those who have seen any of Clarke's letters, it is a matter of deep regret that he has not, like the gallant Smith, his illustrious prototype, written for posterity an account of his Indian wars.\* His favorite object, the taking of Detroit, he seems to have constantly kept in view. During the Summer of 1779, and the Spring of 1780, we see him actively employed in making vigorous preparations for its accomplishment. At one time, he proceeded so far as to rendezvous a considerable number of friendly Indians, perhaps, four or five thousand at Fort St. Vincents; but disappointed in the number of Whites he expected, and not chusing to rely principally on the Indians, he was compelled to abandon the expedition. He contented himself with inflicting severe chastisement on those savage tribes, whose eternal hostilities had proved them incapable of living on friendly terms with the people of the States.

The claims  
of Virginia  
to her Western  
lands  
disputed.

Whilst, at the expence of the Commonwealth, and at the head of State troops, Clarke thus strengthened the title of Virginia to the Western country, by the addition of conquest to chartered rights, the General Congress listened too favourably to the reclamations of the Indiana and other companies, of a similar description. The immense tracts of vacant Territory within the chartered limits of some of the States, and, in particular, of Virginia, had early attracted the general attention. In them was seen an almost inexhaustible source of future wealth—a fund capable not only of affording extensive encouragement for the defenders of the common liberties, but of covering the vast national debt, which the expenditures of the war must necessarily create. The States not possessed of a similar advantage, insisted on considering this unappropriated Ter-

---

\* Colonel Clarke was afterwards made Brigadier-General—we are told he is still living in the Western country. Such of his letters as are before us, evince a strong, comprehensive, combining, luminous mind. With him hardships, difficulties, battles, &c. seem to have been matters of course—As he acted and fought without pretensions to fame, he relates with an interesting simplicity:—His modesty is equal to his courage.

CHAP.  
XV.

1779

ritory, as a joint acquisition, which should be applied to the common benefit. This was the principal impediment to the final ratification by all the States of the Articles of Confederation. It was asserted that the boundaries of any State, though ever so well ascertained, did not prove the title or right of such State to all lands within such boundaries. A distinction was established between those lands which had been alienated by the Crown, and were, at the date of American Independence, vested in particular persons, either sole or aggregate, and those lands which remained in the Crown, as a trust for the use of the public. The sovereignty of the Crown, it was said, had by the revolution been transferred to the Supreme Power of the American Commonwealth, that is to the Congress, and whatever the Crown held in virtue of that sovereignty, had experienced the same fate. The Crown lands, then, were the property of the whole American Republic, and ought to be disposed of for the common use and benefit. Besides, it was urged that no State could acquire more right, or property than another by that revolution which had been commenced, promoted, and nearly perfected by the joint effort and expence of the whole. The quotas of the States possessing unappropriated lands could not, it was further observed, be proportionate to the great extent of their Territories, because their present inhabitants were unequal to such a burthen. The expence of the war was not to be estimated merely by the cash it cost; but the devastations of the enemy, the loss of lives, the stagnation of trade, and of multiplied branches of industry, ought to be brought into the account. When made on these principles, the estimate rose very high on those parts of the interest defended which could lose no lives, because they had no inhabitants, suffer no devastations, because they had no improvements which could be destroyed. The lands in question, then, would, in their present state, no more than repay the expence of their preservation, and that expence was common: all the States exerted themselves with equal ardor, danger, and activity in carrying on the war, and it was but reasonable they should all share alike in the advantages resulting from it, supposing the vacant Territories to promise more than was advanced for their protection. Whilst these, and other reasons were alledged against the general claim of certain States to their vacant lands, in general, the companies above alluded to pressed upon the Congress their particular interests, and were heard with an indulgence, which alarmed the Legislature of Virginia, and drew from them the following energetic, clear, and dignified remonstrance:

“ The General Assembly of Virginia, ever attentive to  
 “ the recommendations of Congress, and desirous to give  
 “ the great Council of the United States every satisfaction  
 “ in their power, consistent with the rights and constituti-

Remon-  
 strance of  
 the Vir. Le-  
 gislature on  
 the subject.

CHAP. "on of their own Commonwealth, have enacted a law to  
 XV. "prevent settlements on the North-west side of the Ohio  
 "river, and will on all occasions, endeavour to manifest  
 "their attachment to the common interest of America,  
 1779 "and their earnest wishes to remove every cause of jea-  
 "lousy, and promote that mutual confidence and harmony  
 "between the different States, so essential to their true in-  
 "terest and safety."

"Strongly impressed with these sentiments, the General Assembly of Virginia cannot avoid expressing their surprise and concern upon the information that Congress had received and countenanced petitions from certain persons stiling themselves the Vandalia and Indiana companies, asserting claims to lands in defiance of the civil authority, jurisdiction, and laws of this Commonwealth, and offering to erect a separate government within the Territory thereof. Should Congress assume a jurisdiction, and arrogate to themselves a right of adjudication, not only unwarranted by, but expressly contrary to the fundamental principles of the confederation, superseding or controuling the internal policy, civil regulations, and municipal laws of this, or any other State, it would be a violation of public faith, introduce a most dangerous precedent, which might hereafter be urged to deprive of Territory, or subvert the sovereignty and government of any one or more of the United States, and establish in Congress a power, which, in process of time, must degenerate into an intolerable despotism."

"It is notorious that the Vandalia and Indiana companies are not the only claimants of large tracts of land, under titles repugnant to our laws; that several men of great influence in some of the neighbouring States, are concerned in partnership with the Earl of Dunmore, and other subjects of the British King, who, under purchases from the Indians, claim extensive tracts of country between the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, and that propositions have been made to Congress evidently calculated to secure and guarantee such purchases, so that, under colour of creating a common fund, had those propositions been adopted, the public would have been duped by the arts of individuals, and great part of the value of unappropriated lands converted to private purposes."

"Congress have lately described and ascertained the boundaries of these United States, as an ultimatum in their terms of peace. The United States hold no Territory but in right of some one individual State in the Union. The Territory of each State from time immemorial, has been fixed and determined by their respective charters, there being no other rule or criterion to judge by, should these in any instance. (when there is no disputed Territory between particular States) be abridg-



CHAP.  
XV.

1779

“ ed without the consent of the States affected by it, general confusion must ensue ; each State would be subjected, in its turn, to the encroachments of the others, and a field opened for future wars and bloodshed ; nor can any argument be fairly urged to prove that any particular tract of country within the limits claimed by Congress in behalf of the United States, is no part of the chartered Territory of some one of them, but must militate with equal force, against the right of the United States in general, and tend to prove such a tract of country (if Northwest of the Ohio river) part of the British province of Canada.”

“ When Virginia acceded to the articles of confederation, her rights of sovereignty and jurisdiction within her own Territory, were reserved and secured to her, and cannot now be infringed or altered without her consent. She could have no latent views of extending that Territory, because it had long before been expressly and clearly defined in the act which formed her new government.”

“ The General Assembly of Virginia have heretofore offered Congress to furnish lands out of their Territory on the North west side of the Ohio river, without purchase money, to the troops on Continental establishment of such of the confederated States as had not unappropriated lands for that purpose, in conjunction with the other States holding unappropriated lands, and in such a proportion as should be adjusted and settled by Congress ; which offer, when accepted, they will most cheerfully make good to the same extent with the provision made by law for their own troops, if Congress shall think fit to allow the like quantities of land to other troops on Continental establishment. But although the General Assembly of Virginia would make great sacrifices to the common interest of America (as they have already done on the subject of representation) and will be ready to listen to any just and reasonable propositions for removing the *ostensible* causes of delay to the complete ratification of the confederation, they find themselves impelled by the duties which they owe to their constituents, to their posterity, to their country, and to the United States in general, to remonstrate and protest, and they do hereby, in the name and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia, expressly protest against any jurisdiction nor right of adjudication in Congress upon the petitions of the Vandalia and Indiana companies, or on any other matter or thing, subversive of the internal policy, civil government, or sovereignty of this, or any of the United American States, or unwarranted by the articles of the confederation.”

To the principles and spirit of this remonstrance, Virginia firmly adhered until the generous cession of her North-

CHAP.  
XV,

1779

Proceed-  
ings of the  
General As-  
sembly at  
their Octo-  
ber Session.

western Territory to the United States, the motives for which will be developed in the proper place.—Some other resolves of the General Assembly of Virginia, at their autumnal Session of 1779, conveyed to Congress the sentiments of the State on subjects scarcely less delicate than the question of vacant Territories. Congress had called on the States for provisions and other articles on continental account, but claimed the power of regulating the prices of the objects thus furnished. Virginia opposed this assumption. She also contended for the right of judging of the utility and expediency of measures recommended by that body; and declaring that she would, at all times, bear her full share of common burthens with alacrity, urged the propriety of a satisfactory statement by Congress of all the expenditures of the continent. There being no coercive power in Congress, the States remote from danger were remiss or irregular in furnishing their quotas of men and supplies, and the whole load fell on the exposed States, where every nerve was strained to maintain a struggle glorious and beneficial to all. This must naturally have excited jealousy and complaint.—The account of Virginia with the United States was extremely complicated, as the demand commenced from the beginning of the war. To adjust it, required calm, dispassionate Chancellors, and not prejudiced Judges, and the opening of the land office had certainly prejudiced Congress against the State. Policy required an enlargement rather than a negation of power to the General Congress: but their authority must bind all the States, or bind none of them.

At this Session, the Assembly determined the quantity of land which should be allowed to officers and soldiers, at the close of the war,\* and provided means of keeping vacant, the country allotted them. Taxation was again extended. Indeed, the Legislators found themselves cheated in every essay of this nature, by the depreciation intervening between the declaration of the tax and the actual receipt. Yet, taxation was not to be abandoned. Either taxes must assist in supporting the common cause, or the people must, after lavishing so much blood and treasure, submit to an inglorious, humiliating, and disadvantageous peace. Acts against excessive gaming, monopoly, and extensive credits, which the rapid increase of depreciation

---

* To a Colonel,	5,000 Acres,
a Lieut. Col.	4,500
Major,	4,000
Captain,	3,000
Every Subaltern, Chaplain, Surgeon, Surgeon's mate,	2,000
Every Non commissioned officer,	400
Every Soldier and Sailor,	100
Officers in navy—the same—in proportion to rank.	In 1780, the Assembly
granted to a Major General	15,000 acr's.
(To Baron Steuben the same.) Brigadier General,	10,000

rendered ruinous, are among the labours of this Session. The Governor was authorized to march 1,500 militia to South Carolina, and invested with extraordinary powers, in case of an invasion. The State-troops for the defence of the Eastern frontier were incorporated with the artillery and garrison corps; the cavalry was reduced to three troops, and the parties on the Western borders, formed into one regiment. The small navy of the State\* was reorganized; and the re-enlistment of the troops in the Continental service, encouraged with usual solicitude.

CHAP.  
XV.

1779

The situation of Virginia, and the produce of her soil, as well as the wants of her citizens, invited foreign commerce to her ports. Already several French merchants and seamen had visited her shores; and, under the auspices of Independence, other nations would, it was probable, soon open with her a similar intercourse. This induced the General Assembly to pass "an Act for the protection and encouragement of the commerce of nations, acknowledging the Independence of the United States of America." The treaty of commerce with France had provided for the establishment of Consuls, or commercial agents. Virginia recollects the Chevalier Danmours the first person that ever acted in that capacity, within her Territory. His appointment was the occasion of the act just mentioned. A proclamation of the Governor accredited him as French Consul, and promulgated the fundamental rules of future commercial intercourse with friendly nations.

Encouragement of foreign commerce.

It ought not to be omitted that, at this Session, the suspension of the laws giving salaries to the Clergy, hitherto temporary, was rendered perpetual.

Salaries of the Clergy entirely abolished.

\* *To be sold*—Ships Tartar and Dragon—Gallies Henry, Manly, Hero, Page, Lewis and State-guard.

*Retained*—Ship Thetis, Brig Jefferson, Gallies, Accomack and Diligence, Boats, Patriot and Liberty, one Lookout boat to be built.

Retained also, ship Gloucester, for a prison-ship, and *Tempest*, until the Thetis should be ready for sea.



## CHAPTER XVI.

---

*Sir Henry Clinton goes to South Carolina—Surrender of Charleston—Virginian officers killed during the Siege—The Americans surprised at Monk's Corner—Colonel White defeated by Tarleton—Depredations of the British—Buford defeated by Tarleton—Measures of sir Henry Clinton after the fall of Charleston—Clinton returns to New York—Dispositions of Cornwallis—Movements of the disaffected in North Carolina—State of things in Virginia—Baron De Kalb is sent to the South—Proceedings of the Virginia Legislature—Patriotism of the Virginian Ladies—Gates is appointed to the command of the Southern department—His embarrassments—Gates joins De Kalb—And marches towards the enemy—Is joined by Caswell and Porterfield—Battle of Camden—Gates is defeated, and retreats to Hillsborough—His exertions to re-create the army—Zeal of the Southern States to retrieve their affairs—Rigor of Cornwallis—Cornwallis marches from Camden—Ferguson's defeat—Cornwallis falls back to Wymnsborough—Tarleton is defeated by Sumpter—General Gates is succeeded by General Green.*

### CHAP. XVI.

---

1780

Sir Henry  
Clinton  
goes to S.  
Carolina.

As soon as the failure of the attempt upon Savannah, and the departure of Count D'Estaing from the American coast, had removed Sir Henry Clinton's alarm for the safety of New York, he again turned his attention to the Southern States, whose climate would favour winter operations, and whose exposed condition invited enterprize. A strong detachment, consisting of infantry and cavalry, was embarked at New York, with abundant supplies of every description. General Clinton himself was to command these troops, and Admiral Arbuthnot to escort the armament, with an adequate naval force. On the 26th of December, 1779, the whole sailed from Sandy Hook. Tempestuous weather dispersed the fleet: some ships were taken, some lost; the horses and heavy ordnance were in the latter: and scarcely any of the ships, escaped the fury of the elements, or hostile Cruizers, reached Tybee in Georgia, the appointed place of rendezvous, before the close of January, 1780. After repairing injuries, Clinton sailed for Edisto Sound in South Carolina, and landed on John's Island, and at Stono ferry. He then slowly and cautiously advanced towards Charleston, forming depots, and erecting forts at various points of his route, either from extreme caution inculcated by the vigorous repulse which he had experienced

Febr'y 11.

CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

March 29.

before Charleston, in 1776, or with a view to seduce Lincoln to continue in that place. Twelve hundred Auxiliaries from Savannah, joined him during his approach, and this junction met with scarcely any other interruption than a conflict between Tarleton's legion and Lieutenant Colonel Washington's\* cavalry. In this rencounter, Washington repulsed his opponent, and took seven prisoners, among whom, the celebrated Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton of the North Carolina royal regiment. So slow was the progress of Sir Henry, that he did not reach the banks of the Ashley river before the 29th of March, having proceeded only 30 miles since the 11th of February. On the 30th he crossed the Ashley, and on the following day, invested Charleston.

Had Lincoln yielded to the suggestions of his own mind, he would have imitated the cautious system of the American Fabius—abandoned the Metropolis, for the protection of the whole country, or, at least, of its most important parts—presented a central point round which the scattered detachments of the South might have collected—invigorated resistance—awed disaffection—harrassed, and, perhaps, crushed the British troops, when separated from their ships—unfortunately, numberless influences overruled the dictates of his own judgment. The implied wish of Congress that he should not sacrifice the naval force in the harbour, and the magazines and military stores collected in the town, to remove which no sufficient number of waggons could be procured—the resolution unanimously taken, in a full House, by the Legislature of South Carolina, to defend the town to the last extremity—the anxiety of the Governor and the people to protect their flourishing and proud Metropolis—finally, the promise of abundant succours,† such were the causes which impelled Lincoln

---

\* Of Stafford County, Virginia.

† Lincoln received a reinforcement of 3 or 400 Virginia regulars commanded by Col. Heth, and some new levies and militia from North Carolina. The fleet consisted of four Continental frigates, two French vessels of war, one of 26, the other of eighteen guns, two brigs of 20 guns, and one of 16 guns.—During the siege (April 10,) General Woodford, detached by Washington from Morristown, entered the place with the old Virginia line, about seven hundred effectives. General Huger with the North Carolina line had already arrived—the whole garrison then amounted to about 2,000 regulars—1,000 North Carolina militia—and the citizens of Charleston.—The force of the enemy was between 11 and 12,000 viz: about 8,000 in the lines before the town, and 4,000 under Cornwallis on the North side of Cooper river. (we speak here of things as they were April 27)—Rutledge was endeavouring to form a camp North of the Santee, with a view to force Cornwallis's posts on the North of Cooper river, and throw provisions into the town. He had with him (April 27) 400 militia and 300 regulars. The succours going to him were 420 infantry and 60 horse under Colonel Porterfield—regulars—to join Rutledge about the end of May. 200 horse under Colonel Armand—a little behind Porterfield—1,900 Maryland and Delaware's regulars—under Baron De Kalb—

CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

Surrender  
of Charles-  
ton.

May 12.

to stand a siege. The interesting details of the operations which arose from the attack and defence have been amply and ably recorded by several American Historians. Clinton broke ground on the 1st of April ; on the 7th of May his artillery was mounted in the batteries of his third parallel, and on the 12th Charleston surrendered. The passage of the bar had been found indefensible, owing to the shallowness of the water within it ; and the British fleet passing Fort Moultrie without much injury, had efficiently co-operated with the land forces. It was not then the loss of their honour, but the loss of their army and property, that the Americans had to deplore. To yield to so superior a force was no disgrace, but the capture of the main body of the Southern army, was a deep wound—a wound, the effects of which were felt in the very bowels of all the Southern States, and caused there an inflammation which had like to consume their life-blood.

The terms of the capitulation surrendered to the victor, the town and fortifications, the shipping, artillery, and all other public property whatever, in their present condition. The Continental troops, the militia, the sailors and all armed citizens, became prisoners of war ; the militia and the citizens to be paroled—the regulars to be conducted to some convenient place and to remain there, until exchanged, and to receive good treatment. Officers retained their horses, arms, baggage and servants—but their horses were not to be taken out of Charleston. Neither the persons nor the property of the militia and the inhabitants, were to be molested, so long as they observed their paroles—and the sick were to receive that attention which humanity dictated. The garrison would march out of town, and deposit their arms in front of the works of the place ; but the drums were not to beat a British march, or the colours to be uncased.

Virginia of-  
ficers killed  
during the  
Siege.

Among the defenders of Charleston, were some of those patriotic Virginians, who, at the earliest call of their injured country, had buckled on their armour, and assisted in driving Lord Dunmore from their native State. Colonel Richard Parker, of the first Virginia regiment, towards the close of the siege, received a ball in his head, and fell lifeless in the trenches. Captain Peyton met with the same honourable death. Brigadier General Woodford was doomed to languish and die in a state of captivity.\*

expected to join about the 28th of June.

4,000 North Carolina militia,  
(call them only 2,000)

2,500 Virginia militia,  
(call them 1250, or 1000)

} could not be there before the 10th and  
the last of July. Provisions in the town  
to last till the 10th of July.

\* The treatment of the American prisoners in South Carolina presents another hideous view of the character given to the war by the British. We use here an authority not to be denied, that of the veridic Ramsay. Prisoners were at first confined in the vaults with the dead—afterwards in



To preserve the communication between the town and country, during the siege, General Lincoln had placed the regular cavalry, amounting to three hundred men, with a small body of militia, under the command of Brigadier General Huger. These were encamped at Monk's Corner. Clinton, anxious for the complete investiture of Charleston, determined to strike that post. Lieutenant Colonel Webster was entrusted with this service. The latter detached Tarleton, reinforced by Major Ferguson's corps of riflemen, towards Monk's Corner. A surprise was judged advisable. They accidentally met with a negro, whom a small pecuniary reward easily induced to conduct the British, in the night, and through unfrequented paths, to the American encampment. At 3 o'clock in the morning, they reached Monk's Corner, and although the commanding officer of the American cavalry had taken the precaution of keeping his horses saddled and bridled, and although the alarm was given by his Videttes, yet Tarleton fell upon the party with such impetuosity,

prison-ships—obliged continually to stand up for want of room to lie down—no *douceur* could be procured for the sick.—In 13 months, upwards of 800 perished. In violation of the capitulation of Charleston, the Continental troops were put on board prison-ships—where distress of every kind assailed and consumed them—British emissaries encouraged them to enlist in the royal service—clothing and money sent for them by Congress, they were denied—the object was to wear out their patience, and thus force them to enlist. The rations allowed to the wives and children of some, were, upon their refusal, withdrawn—and these helpless, wretched beings exposed to the horrors of famine. Physicians were prevented from visiting the sick.—The ladies of Charleston, without distinction of whig and tory, at length relieved the sufferers. The Continental officers were confined to Haddrell's Point and the vicinity—no civility shewn them.—They were even debarred of the liberty of fishing, (which, in their present situation, was for them more than amusement.) They were informed in March 1781, that Cornwallis had ordered them to some one of the W. India Islands—but this was prevented by a general exchange of prisoners in the Southern department. The citizens of the town who adhered to their paroles, though not allowed rations, were precluded from exercising their respective trades—Loyalists were forbidden to employ them—the property of those, who had any, was not respected—Christopher Gadsden, the aged and respectable Lieutenant Governor, and other friends of America, prisoners on parole, were removed to St. Augustine—though charged with no breach of parole, there they were treated with revolting indignities, compelled to appear every day, on the public parade, and to answer to their names at roll-calling. Retaliation for Andre on their persons, was daily intimated. They were not allowed to correspond freely with their wives or friends—when a general exchange of prisoners took place in May, 1781, they were released, but not allowed to go to their homes. They were sent to Philadelphia—their wives and children were, at the same time, torn from their habitations, and transported to the same place, to share with their husbands and fathers exile and poverty—All this requires no comment. It must be observed, however, that if the loyalty of Clinton, Cornwallis, Rawdon, Balfour, Glazier, &c. admitted of a doubt, they might be suspected of having intended, by such wanton severities, the complete subversion of the British Empire in America. For, depend upon it, such is the nature of the human heart, that *terrorism* will never effect any thing in the end. In fact, they served the American cause, and not their King. Persecution, whether political or religious, always will defeat its objects. (See Ramsay's S. Carolina, Vol. II.)

CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

The Americans surprised at Monk's Corner,  
April 14.

that no efficient resistance could be offered. General Hunger, Colonels Washington and Jamieson found safety in their knowledge of the country. It was there that Tarleton's dragoons began their career of brutal outrage in the South. Stedman, a British Historian mentioned before, and who was in this affair, has preserved particulars, which the austere pencil of truth is sometimes compelled to delineate, but from which humanity always turns her eyes in disgust. About thirty of the American cavalry were slain or taken; the militia, stationed at some distance, in a meeting house, were charged with fixed bayonets, and dispersed. This unfortunate affair threw into the hands of the British a considerable number of waggons and horses, and a large quantity of ammunition, provisions and clothing. It also gave to Webster the command of the country between the Wando, and the Cooper. Soon after, Lord Cornwallis united his detachment with the force under Webster, and overran the whole country, south of the Santee, burning all the grain and killing all the cattle, which he could not carry off. His posts on the Cooper-river prevented all communication with the town, and rendered the blockade complete. Governor Rutledge, who had hitherto found his dictatorial authority of little avail, in collecting the militia, endeavoured to form a camp on the North side of the Santee, with a view to dislodge Cornwallis from the Northern margin of the Cooper, or, at least, to harrass his foraging detachments. After the disaster at Monk's Corner, the remains of the American cavalry had retired to that post, under the command of Lieutenant Col. White, of Moylan's regiment. There also about 400 regulars, parts of Scott's and Woodford's corps, headed by Colonel Buford of Virginia, who had arrived too late to enter the invested place, had sought an opportunity of becoming serviceable. From that station, White anxiously watched the foe, with a view to inflict on his marauders some sudden and successful blow. The wished for moment soon arrived. A foraging party approached; crossing the Santee at Dupuy's ferry, White intercepted that party, with which he retired to Lennew's ferry, on the same river, expecting to find there means of transportation for himself, his men, and his prisoners. Tarleton was on the same day, proceeding to the same point, to observe the situation and movements of the Americans. A Loyalist informed him on the road, of the success and intention of White, who, not having found the necessary boats at the appointed place, was resting his troops, until they appeared. Stimulated by this intelligence, Tarleton with his usual celerity, urged his legion forward, and unexpectedly attacking White, repeated the catastrophe of Monk's Corner. Some of the Americans cut their way through the British cavalry; others escaped by swimming.

Col. White  
defeated by  
Tarleton,  
May 6.

1780

Depredations of the British.

The prisoners were rescued, having risen on their guard, just as the boat was pushing off to convey them to the opposite bank. The Americans had about thirty men killed or taken.

The British had reduced plundering to a system—Plate, horses, negroes, indigo, and other articles of value, were collected into a public stock, and sold for the benefit of the royal army. So considerable was the quantity of booty in the market, that, notwithstanding the cheapness resulting from this overflow, the dividend of a Major General amounted to more than four thousand guineas. To this must be added the fruits of private rapine, exceeding, perhaps, what was thrown into a common mass. Cargoes of slaves and other spoil, were sent to West-India markets. Noble trophies! Eternal monuments of heroic warfare!

The Metropolis of South-Carolina, and the main body of the Southern army, having thus been involved in a common fate, by falling together into the hands of the enemy, the next object of the victor was to suppress opposition in every part of the State. Three British divisions were put in motion. The first, under Lieutenant Colonel Brown, moved up the Savannah to Augusta; the second, headed by Lieutenant Colonel Balfour, following the Southern banks of the Wateree, proceeded to Ninety-six; while the third, led by Lord Cornwallis crossed the Santee and took post on the North side of it, about 57 miles below Camden. This last column consisted of 3,900 men, and was soon after joined by 1200 more, with a design to establish a post at Camden, and proceed higher up the country. Intelligence of this was received at Camden, on the 27th of May. General Huger, who commanded the North Carolina troops under General Caswell, and the Virginia Continentals under Col. Buford, ordered them to retreat, the former to Pedee river, and the latter to Salisbury, where Porterfield had now arrived, with a detachment of four hundred men, from Virginia. Caswell made good his retreat; but Colonel Buford's corps was doomed to feel the keen edge of the British sabre. Cornwallis delegated to Tarleton the destruction of that corps. After a rapid march of 105 miles in fifty-four hours, Tarleton overtook the retreating party, at the Waxhaws, near the borders of North Carolina. Heat and fatigue had caused several of the British cavalry and mounted infantry to drop into the rear. To give them time to come up, and the better to make his dispositions for the attack, Tarleton proposed to Buford terms of a surrender. Scarcely had the negotiation commenced, when the British furiously charged the Americans, most of them still unacquainted with Buford's

Buford defeated by Tarleton.

May 29.



CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

rejection of the proposed terms,\* and, consequently, irresolute and unprepared. The waggons, cannon, and baggage had been ordered to continue their march, and a position taken in an open wood, on the right side of the road. There the infantry was drawn up in one line, and, according to Tarleton's account, they received orders to retain their fire, till the British dragoons were quite close.—If so, the suddenness of the assault must have rendered impracticable the more efficient plan of a successive fire by platoons or divisions, commenced at a proper distance, and vigorously maintained. The British leader more justly animadverts on Buford, for not having placed his waggons in the front and rear of his corps. As the road was lined with woods on each side, this would have effectually broken the attack of the British Cavalry; and it is even probable that no attack would have been made. The military annals both of ancient and modern times afford parallel instances not only of protection, but of galling annoyance to the foe, derived from such a disposition. But if the American Commander was chargeable with an error of the judgment, Tarleton was guilty of an unpardonable crime—cruelty to an unresisting enemy. Attacking the Americans, in both flanks with dismounted troops, and in front with cavalry, he instantly created confusion and dismay. A few of Buford's men fired; the rest lay down their arms, and begged for quarter. No quarter was given. One hundred and thirty Americans were killed on the spot; one hundred and fifty so barbarously mangled that the sanguinary foe was obliged to parole them on the ground. Few of these survived. Fifty three prisoners, still capable of being moved, accompanied the victor to Camden. Two pieces of ordnance, several waggons, and other objects, fell into the hands of the British. Buford, a few horsemen, and about one hundred advanced infantry found safety in flight.—Resentment was in their hearts; they swore to revenge their mangled, butchered comrades; and communicated far and wide the spirit which animated their own bosoms against the ruthless legion, and its blood-thirsty leader. “In the annals of our Indian wars [says Henry Lee, the same distinguished officer whom we have lately seen at Powle's Hook, and who was afterwards more than once opposed in battle to the ferocious Tarleton, to whom he did not yield in enterprize, activity and courage, while he surpassed him in a virtue which he always cherished, even amidst the irritations of the time—humanity] nothing is to be found more shocking than the barbarity exercised

---

\* Henry Lee alone makes Buford propose the terms, and Tarleton reject them. As Tarleton has given both the summons, and Buford's negative letter, and as all historians concur with him, we have followed the general belief. The other fact would considerably aggravate Tarleton's barbarity.

CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

on Buford's men : and this bloody day only wanted the war dance and the roasting fire to have placed it first in the records of torture and of death in the West." From British historians themselves, the pre-eminent ferocity of the legion has extorted stern censure. "In the victory over Buford, says Stedman, humanity was totally forgot." Lord Cornwallis probably thought differently ; for, in his official report, he bestowed on Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton the highest encomiums, and, in a special manner recommended him to royal favour. Tarleton aspired to everlasting fame : he has acquired it. Long shall his name be remembered, and execrated, wherever humanity dwells. In Virginia there still exists,\* to our knowledge, a living monument of his barbarity, a poor, mangled, disfigured, old soldier, of Buford's party, who was left for dead on the goary field ; he artlessly, but feelingly tells the tale of horror ; the rising generation nursed in the lap of peace, innocence and security, listen to him with commingled astonishment, sympathy and doubt ; they could not believe the shocking details of the aged narrator, did not his mutilated frame aver their truth, and history confirm this sad evidence. In the mean while, the horrid fact sinks deep into the minds of our children. They learn what British warfare was, and may still be—They learn at what price liberty has been purchased—and must perhaps be preserved. The thought kindles and feeds in their breasts a holy indignation ; and the cruelties practised in 1780, re-act, even at this day, against their perpetrators, and restore that equilibrium of good and evil, which the great author of nature never permits long to be disturbed !

The capture or destruction of all the Continental forces in South Carolina, stifled resistance for a time. Lassitude, impotence, and want of concert, prevented exertion ; a sullen calm pervaded the country ; in short, liberty seemed to have expired.—At first, the royal Commander had, by a minatory proclamation, denounced the extremity of vengeance against such inhabitants as should oppose in arms the restoration of the British Government. Apparent clemency succeeded these threats. On the first of June, Clinton and Arbuthnot, as Commissioners for re-establishing tranquility and good order, offered to those individuals who should return to their allegiance, with a few exceptions "a full and free pardon for their past treasonable offences, and a re-instatement in the possession of all those rights and immunities which they heretofore had enjoyed under a free British Government, exempt from taxation, except by their own Legislatures." Many persons

Measures of  
Sir Henry  
Clinton, after the fall  
of Charleston.

\* Near Petersburg—See Appendix.

CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

June 3.

obeyed this call, and renewed their allegiance. At Beaufort, Camden, and Ninety Six, the people submitted on condition that they should enjoy for themselves, and their property the same protection and security as British subjects. To maintain this submission, British posts were established at suitable points. Except on the borders of North Carolina, no symptom of resistance now manifested itself. The inhabitants of the state now consisted of two prominent classes—the Loyalists—and those who took their situation to be that of neutrals, or prisoners on parole. The latter were soon awakened from this dream of fancied neutrality, by a proclamation of Sir Henry Clinton, declaring “all paroles given to prisoners not taken by capitulation, and not confined at the time of the surrender of Charleston, to be null and void after the 20th of June; and calling upon the holders of such paroles to resume the character of British subjects, and to take an active part in forwarding military operations, under pain of being considered and treated as rebels against his Majesty’s Government.” The impolicy of this measure is obvious. So soon as it became necessary for the inhabitants to take the tented field, and submit to the hardships of war, either for Great Britain, or for their native country, their choice could not be doubtful. In the unsupported State of the country, threats and promises might indeed, induce some to join the British standard. But let an American army approach, and inspire the people with hopes of protection, independently of those strong partialities which are closely interwoven by nurture, education, and habit, in the mysterious web of human affections, and which bind all men to the place of their birth, the mass of the South Carolinians would be actuated by keen resentment at the sudden transition from assumed lenity to a demand of bearing arms in manifestation of their loyalty, or being exposed to a confiscation of property, and personal punishment for supposed crimes; in the dilemma, most of them would certainly join, even at the hazard of their possessions, even under the necessity of a painful avulsion from their parents, wives, and children, those sacred banners on which were inscribed the magic, resistless words, *for our country!* and which, were always found in the path of honour and duty.—But Clinton knew little of the human heart; and he relied much on the *ultima ratio*, the cannon and the bayonet. Deluded conqueror! Infatuated agent of a still more infatuated ministry!—Amid the threats, the terrors, the triumphs of violence, the will of patriots remains unshaken: while you fondly dream of destroying, in the rough grasp of tyranny, the elasticity of free minds, you only increase it!—Having thus re-annexed, as he thought, South Carolina, as well as Georgia, to the British empire, Clinton, informed that a French armament of



considerable force was daily expected in the North, embarked for New York, carrying with him all the troops that could be spared, and delegating to Earl Cornwallis all his civil and military powers, with an injunction strictly to maintain the submission of the vanquished, and to carry the war into North Carolina, immediately after the sultry months. For this double purpose, a force of about 4,000 men was placed under the command of the Earl.

The necessity of organizing a temporary Government, called Lord Cornwallis to Charleston. In his absence, the main body of the army stationed at Camden, was left under the command of Lord Rawden. Major McArthur was advanced to Cheraw-hill with two battalions of Highlanders. His became the task to preserve the communication between Camden and Georgetown, where Capt. Saunders was stationed with a body of Loyalists. An intermediate post was also established at Rocky Mount, towards Ninety Six. The loyalty of the inhabitants was, at the same time, stimulated by every possible method, and large numbers swelled the British ranks.—Active emissaries were sent among the disaffected in North-Carolina; especially, about Cross-Creek, a part of the State chiefly inhabited by emigrants from the Scotch Highlands, or their descendants. We have already stated, when relating the principal events of 1776, the prejudices and partialities of this description of inhabitants in favour of the royal cause. Again we find them in arms against the liberties of the country which had enrolled them among its citizens. Although Lord Cornwallis had, by his secret agents, advised them to remain at home, attend their harvest, and collect provisions, until the royal army should enter North-Carolina, towards the beginning of September, because to rise prematurely, and fly to arms without proper support, would be pulling down certain ruin on their heads, yet a body of them collected under a Colonel Moore, and prepared for hostilities. Brigadier General Rutherford of North-Carolina, who had lately compelled the British to evacuate an advanced post at the Waxhaws, hearing of Moore's intentions, sent a detachment against him, under the command of Colonel Locke. The patriots were wretchedly armed, and ill supplied with ammunition. But they had enterprise, fervor, intrepidity. Locke quickly routed and dispersed the assemblage under Moore.—The martial spirit of the Scotch settlers was not repressed by this check; nor could they be persuaded to reserve themselves for the favourable moment of the approach meditated by Cornwallis. Wound up to the utmost impatience by their inbred ardour, their mistaken loyalty, and perhaps, their apprehensions of impending chastisement from the watchful Rutherford, eight hundred of them embodied under a Colonel Bry-

CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

June 5.

Disposition  
of Cornwallis.

Movements  
of the disaffected in N.  
Carolina.

June 22.

CHAP. an, and made good their way to Cheraw-hill, where McAr-  
 XVI. thur joyfully hailed their arrival.

1780

On the first of June, Colonel Porterfield, who had advanced to Salisbury, with a body of 500 Virginia State troops, hearing of Buford's disaster, and imagining that the main army under Cornwallis was in motion towards North Carolina, retreated from that Town, and crossed the Yadkin, with an intention to return and join the militia, if they should discover any alacrity, and turn out in such numbers as to enable him to prevent the further progress of the enemy into the upper parts of the State. Governor Rutledge was then at Salisbury, endeavouring to rouse the spirit of his countrymen, and urging succours from congress, the Commander in Chief, and the neighbouring States.

State of  
 things in  
 Virginia.  
 June 11.

The following extract of a letter from Governor Jefferson to the Cammander in Chief, dated June 11th, presents an accurate view of the state of things, North of South Carolina :

“ \* \* \* \* \*  
 “ \* \* \* \* \*  
 “ \* \* \* \* \* Our intelligence from the Southward is  
 “ most lamentably defective. Though Charleston has now  
 “ been in the hands of the enemy a month, we hear no-  
 “ thing of their movements, which can be relied upon.  
 “ Rumours say that they are penetrating Northward. To  
 “ remedy this defect, I shall immediately establish a line  
 “ of expresses from hence to the neighbourhood of their  
 “ army, and send thither a sensible, judicious person, to  
 “ give us information of their movements. This intelli-  
 “ gence, will I hope, be conveyed to us at the rate 120 miles,  
 “ in the 24 hours. They set out to their stations to-morrow.  
 “ I wish it were possible that a like speedy line of commu-  
 “ nication could be formed from hence to your excellency's  
 “ head-quarters. Perfect and speedy information of what  
 “ is passing in the South, might put it in your power per-  
 “ haps to frame your measures by theirs. There is re-  
 “ ally nothing to oppose the progress of the enemy North-  
 “ ward, but the cautious principle of the military art.  
 “ North Carolina is without arms. We do not abound.  
 “ Those we have are freely imparted to them ; but such is  
 “ the state of their resources that they have not been able  
 “ to move a single musket from this State to theirs. All  
 “ the Waggon's we can collect here, have been furnished to  
 “ the Baron De Kalb, and are assembled for the march of  
 “ 2,500 men under General Stevens, of Culpepper, who  
 “ will move on the 19th instant. I have written to Con-  
 “ gress to hasten supplies of arms and military stores for  
 “ the Southern States, and particularly to aid us with car-  
 “ tridge paper and boxes, the want of which articles, small  
 “ as they are, renders our stores useless. The want of

“ money cramps every effort. This will be supplied by  
 “ the most unpalatable of all substitutes, force. Your ex-  
 “ cellency will readily conceive that, after the loss of one  
 “ army, our eyes are turned towards the other, and that we  
 “ comfort ourselves with the hope that, if any aids can be  
 “ furnished by you, without defeating the operations more  
 “ beneficial to the union, they will be furnished. At the  
 “ same time, I am happy to find that the wishes of the peo-  
 “ ple go no further, as far as I have an opportunity of  
 “ learning their sentiments. Could arms be furnished, I  
 “ think this State and North Carolina would embody from  
 “ ten to fifteen thousand militia immediately, and more,  
 “ if necessary. The following is the State of the force in,  
 “ and about to be in, motion:

Col. Buford's* regulars (of Scott's and Woodford's men)	400,
Colonel Porterfield's Do. of Virginia State troops	500,
Colonel Armand's horse	190,
The remains of White's and Washing- ton's, as is said, about	200,
The Maryland & Delaware troops & Artillery,	1,900,
Virginia Militia	2,500,
N. Carolina Militia, under Caswell in the field	400,
Do. embodying, if they can be armed,	4000,

“ I hope ere long to be able to give you a more certain  
 “ State of the enemy's as well as our situation.”

Baron De  
Kalb is sent  
to the South

Major Harlstone, and other persons, sent by Governor Rutledge to Congress and the intermediate States, to represent the deplorable situation of the South, and solicit prompt succours, had not made a fruitless appeal.—The Maryland and Delaware troops under Baron De Kalb, had been ordered to march from General Washington's head quarters, long before the surrender of Charleston. Want of proper accoutrements and provisions, delayed their departure. At length, however they took their route through Jersey and Pennsylvania, embarked at the head of Elk, and soon after landed at Petersburg. From that place they proceeded, through the country, towards South Carolina. Congress recommended it to Virginia to raise 5,000 militia to join the Southern army, including 2,500. voted by the General Assembly for that service. A similar recommendation was pressed on North Carolina. The eyes of the people were fully opened to their danger; and we find the Legislature of Virginia adopting, at their spring session, vigorous measures, to assist in re-creating the Southern army. The Executive were authorized to call into the

March 26.

April 16.

Proceed-  
ings of the  
Virginia  
Legislature.

May 5.

\* Mr. Jefferson had not yet been informed of Buford's defeat. However, before he dispatched this letter to General Washington, he received a letter from Governor Rutledge, stating that unfortunate event, and the retreat of Porterfield from Salisbury. He enclosed an extract of it to General Washington.



CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

field large numbers of militia, and to raise troops of cavalry, for re-organizing the regiments of horse, which, after their disasters in the South, had retired to Virginia, broken, but buoyed up by unabated patriotism, and eager hopes of exemplary vengeance. The State quota of Continental troops, also engaged the anxious attention of the General Assembly. For the purpose of completing it, 3,000 men were ordered to be draughted from the militia, who were to furnish one out of every fifteen men, to serve to the last of December, 1780. With renewed danger, the public energy seemed to revive. More rigorous penalties were denounced against desertion. To repress the manœuvres of the secret emissaries of Great Britain, and the efforts of the disaffected in their various shapes, heavy fines and imprisonment were assigned as the penalties of seditious writing and preaching—and other practices tending to dissuade the people from enlisting under the banners of their country—and to induce them passively to submit to an invading foe. The Governor was empowered to impress provisions and other articles, for the service of the country; and likewise to lay an embargo in the ports of the Commonwealth, whenever expedient. The organization of the Boards of war and of trade, being found too complex for the activity and urgency of the times, a Commissioner of the navy, a Commissioner of War, and a Commercial Agent, were substituted in their stead, with appropriate power. The Governor was directed to invigorate the laboratory for the manufacture of arms, which had, of late, been languishing; and, at the same time, to provide proper magazines for warlike stores. The resource of paper emissions was again resorted to, from absolute necessity; and new taxes devised.

Should the State be invaded, 20,000 militia were placed at the disposal of the Executive. The Governor was further authorized to confine, or remove, all persons suspected of disaffection; and to subject to martial law individuals acting as spies, or guides, to the enemy, or in any manner, aiding, abetting, and comforting them—or disseminating among the militia the seeds of discontent, mutiny, and revolt. If to these measures, we add an act for permitting the citizens of Georgia and South Carolina, who rather than submit to the returning power of Britain had fled from their homes, to bring their slaves into the State of Virginia, and leave them in it, until one year after the expulsion of the common enemy, or the restoration of their respective States, and another act for suspending the payment of British debts into the treasury, we shall have embraced nearly all the proceedings of the Legislature during the present session, the first held at Richmond.—The patriotic flame, which, as will be seen in the sequel, had just blazed in the North, and produced liberal offerings at the

altar of the country, by the ladies of Philadelphia, and other places, extended to Virginia.—A few instances only have been preserved,\* of the emulous zeal which animated her patriotic daughters in the present crisis. Although national armies are not to be supported by voluntary and partial donations, yet, as such facts furnish a correct thermometer of the public sentiment and spirit, at any given epoch, history must not suffer them to be lost.

Whilst Virginia thus anxiously turned her eyes to the South, she did not lose sight of Gen. Washington's army, then also labouring under the most alarming difficulties. "I have, Governor Jefferson wrote to the Commander in Chief, on the 3rd of July, with great pain perceived your situation : and the more so, as being situated between two fires, a division of sentiment has arisen, both in Congress and here, to which the resources of this country should be sent. The removal of General Clinton to the Northward, must of course, have great influence on the determination of this question : and I have no doubt but considerable aids may be drawn hence for your army, unless a larger one should be embodied in the South, than the force of the enemy there seem to call for."

General Gates had lately been appointed to the command of the Southern department. In his zeal and abilities, Congress reposed unbounded confidence. On the 20th of June he received the official notification of his appointment: and with cheerful promptitude, obeyed the call of his country. From his farm in Burkely County, in the State of Virginia, where he then was, he immediately informed the President of Congress of his readiness to enter upon the duties assigned to him. "The field is new, he observed, and circumstances untoward ; but I will do my utmost to save, and most effectually to serve the General interest in the South. The powers given me seem as extensive as the field is wide ; and I will believe that the generosity of Congress will be, at least, equal to their confidence. I ask no sort of indulgence for the errors of the heart ; for those of the head alone, I expect their compassion." Gates seems to have then had a secret presentiment of the disaster which was soon to cloud his fame.—At the beginning of July, we find him in Fredericksburg, on his way to the intended scene of action. From this place, he communicated to Governor Nash of North Carolina, information of his appointment, and of his objects. He called on the Continental Pay Master General, who had not been made prisoner in Charleston, to join him with all the warrants and public monies in his possession. To the President of Congress, he also wrote, acquainting him with the cheerful

## CHAP. XVI.

1780

Patriotism  
of the Vir-  
ginian La-  
dies.

Gates is ap-  
pointed to  
the com-  
mand of the  
Southern  
department.

June 13.

\* See Appendix.

CHAP. acquiescence of General Weedon, and Colonel Morgan, in  
XVI. obeying the commands of Congress. "Colonel Morgan,

1780

"Excellency that the State of Virginia have appointed  
"some junior officer to himself, Brigadier General, who  
"will take command of him, should he enter the field in  
"his present rank. This not only is a galling circum-  
"stance to so old and deserving an officer, but must im-  
"pede, and possibly entirely defeat my intention in placing  
"Colonel Morgan at the head of a select corps, from whose  
"service I expect the most brilliant success. Therefore,  
"I humbly entreat your Excellency will move Congress  
"to order a commission to issue immediately, appointing  
"Colonel Morgan a Brigadier General. I am confident  
"the rank, the services, and the experience of Colonel  
"Morgan, will prevent any officer from thinking himself  
"aggrieved by his promotion. I shall impatiently expect  
"the arrival of the commission, as I wish the service in  
"which I mean to employ Colonel Morgan may meet with  
"the least possible delay."\* Colonel Morgan was, in  
consequence of this request, and of his eminent services,  
raised to the rank of Brigadier General by brevet. Un-  
fortunately, he did not reach Carolina in time to take a  
part in the battle of Camden, where his skill and courage  
could not have failed of being advantageously felt.

From Fredericksburg, also, Gates addressed to Lincoln  
the following letter, calculated to sooth the ulcerated feel-  
ings of the vanquished and captive General, and deeply  
expressive of heroic sympathy:

FREDERICKSBURG, July 4, 1780.

"Dear Lincoln,

"The series of misfortunes you have ex-  
perienced since you were doomed to the command of the  
Southern army, has affected me exceedingly. I feel for  
you most sensibly. I feel for myself, who am to suc-  
ceed—to what? The command of an army without  
strength—a military chest without money—a depart-  
ment apparently deficient in public spirit—and a climate  
that increases despondency, instead of animating the sol-  
dier's arm—I wish to save the Southern States—I wish  
to recover the Territories we have lost. I wish to re-  
store you to your command, and to reinstate you in that  
dignity to which your virtues and your perseverance have  
so justly entitled you. With me you have experienced  
that the battle is not always to the strong—poor Bur-  
goyne, in the pride of victory, was overthrown. Could  
the enemies who triumph over you, meet with the like

\* If Gates had before been ungrateful to Morgan, he now atoned for his former error. See Lee's Memoirs—Vol. I, appendix—Page 391.



“disgrace, I should be content to die in peace, so might America be free and independent—and its future happiness, under God, rest solely upon itself! You will oblige me very much by communicating any hint or information which you think will be useful to me in my situation. You know I am not above advice, especially, when it comes from a good head, and sincere heart. Such I have always found yours to be, and as such shall always venerate and esteem both. I mean not by this to urge you to divulge matters, the obligation of your parole of honour commands you to conceal. I only ask you for the knowledge you have acquired of the *carte du pays*—the Whigs and Tories of the Southern States, and how you would advise me to conduct myself in regard to all those—of the enemy I must judge from what I see, and what I will, by every means, endeavour to know.”

At Richmond, the new Metropolis of Virginia, General Gates found warlike measures yet in a state of embryo. By the Governor, he was taught to look forward to much difficulty and a perplexed department. There was zeal every where; but physical obstacles cannot immediately be removed by zeal. A want of arms, and of means of transportation, was severely felt. Of the laboratory, the outlines only were yet in existence; a vessel coming down the Bay with about three thousand stand of arms for the use of the new army, was driven by the enemy's privateers into Wicomico, and much time was wasted in endeavours to have these arms forwarded, either by land or by water. Materials for tents could be procured only in small quantities; and such was the scarcity of waggons that the Executive were compelled to restrain their supplies to medicines, clothing and spirits. Salt meat was added, but in insufficient quantities. When, therefore, Gates arrived at Hillsborough, the place of rendezvous for the troops that were not yet with Baron de Kalb, he found there such a scene of multiplied and increasing wants, as, in the course of a long and critical service had never hitherto fallen to his lot. Baron de Kalb who had advanced to Deep River, suffered the utmost distress from want of bread and animal food. The whole army, without distinction, were at intervals, obliged to feed on such green vegetables and fruit, as they could procure. The scarcity of the crops for the preceding year, and the disaffection of many of the inhabitants, had combined to produce this deplorable effect. The transportation of flour from Virginia had been deemed as unnecessary, as it would have been expensive and tedious, assurances of plentiful supplies of that article having been given by North Carolina. Gates dispatched General Huger to Governors Nash and Jefferson, soliciting immediate relief.

His embarrassments.

July 16.

## CHAP. Sensible also of the importance of cavalry,\* he urged the XVI.

1780

\* General Henry Lee, in his *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department*, charges Gates with paying no attention to the request of White and Washington, to aid their efforts in recruiting, in N. Carolina, their regiments of cavalry, (page 160, vol. 1.) and ascribes the disaster at Camden to his neglect of cavalry. (page 193.) We have before us copies of the whole official correspondence of General Gates, during his Southern command. To this correspondence we recur in relation to the charge thus added to the load of censure, which has been accumulated on the head of the unfortunate General. On the 20th of July, 1780, Gates writes to White from Hillsborough.

"By this time the issue of your application to the Governor and Council of Virginia, must be determined, I hope favourably to your wishes and mine. *I look up to the cavalry for many services*, in a campaign which from our domestic management, as well as the support of energetic operations of the enemy, must be a campaign of much hazard, and some enterprize on our part."

He then repeats the orders given to White, in Richmond, viz. to arm the detachment lately at Petersburg, and march the whole to Halifax—leave an officer to stimulate the State Agents, &c.—to mount at Halifax such number of both regiments as the horses and accoutrements will permit, and *proceed immediately to Head-Quarters*. He adds, "if you cannot be provided with arms at Richmond, some steps shall be taken to furnish you here."

In a letter to the President of the Board of War, Philadelphia, written from Hillsborough, also July 20th—Gates says: "Enclosed is a copy of a letter to Col. White, at Halifax. I desire the Board of War will, if possible, leave the cavalry under his command *without a pretence* for not returning to camp."

In a letter to Governor Jefferson (Hillsborough, July 22,) he observes: "I am happy to find by your Excellency's letter to Colonel Monroe, that the two regiments of cavalry are in a way to push for camp. I beseech your Excellency to continue to leave these corps without a reason for not joining the Southern army, as soon as their zeal for the public service will prompt them to do it." He also urges Major Lee's infantry. In a letter to White, camp, eighteen miles West of Pedee river, August 4, he says:

"In consequence of your informing me that, if the cavalry are called into the field in their present situation, nothing but their ruin can ensue, I am induced to withdraw my last order to you from H. Quarters; and to desire you will not lose an instant after they are equipped for service, in marching the first and third regiments of light dragoons to this army."

After the disaster at Camden, Gates again writes to White (Hillsborough, Sept. 19,) to press the march of the Continental and State cavalry to the Ford on the Yadkin.

☞ August 4, Governor Jefferson writes, in answer to Gates' letter of July 22.—"We have ordered 243 horses to be purchased for Colonels White and Washington—Col. Finnie informs me that Major Lee's infantry has been sent back by special orders"—Sept. 3, Gates writes to General Washington—"White's, Washington's and Nelson's cavalry are not yet thoroughly equipped, from which it abundantly appears: 1st. That it was not in N. Carolina, but in Virginia, that White and Washington were recruiting their corps—2nd. That far from slighting the aid of cavalry, and the request of White and Washington, General Gates duly appreciated the importance of that species of force, and anxiously solicited horses and accoutrements for the corps in question—urging their march in the most pressing terms.

☞ It appears that White was put under arrest, for Gates writes to him, Sept. 25.—"The General Court-Martial, which set this morning in Camp, having ordered your arrest to be superseded, you will proceed immediately to Hawkin's, and take the command of the Continental and State cavalry."

N. B. Sept. 19, Gates gives positive orders to White to march to Hillsborough without delay, there to receive further orders. The arrest was probably in consequence of delay, but we cannot precisely tell.



Governor of Virginia, and even the Continental Board of War at Philadelphia, to remount the remains of White's and Washington's broken corps, now in Petersburg, for the purpose of recruiting. White himself who was to command the renovated corps, was repeatedly enjoined to use all possible diligence in joining the Southern army, as soon as horses and accoutrements should be procured. Major Lee's infantry had been marched Southwardly, but were recalled by special orders. Baron de Kalb had in vain endeavoured to keep Buford's remains under his banners.—Destitute of arms and clothing, they had insisted on marching to Virginia, to obtain both. Gates now pressed their speedy return, and likewise the march of Davies', Brent's and Gibson's men. On the 4th of August, Governor Jefferson informed Gates that due attention had been paid to these different objects. On the 15th of August, General Muhlenburg, who had been left in Virginia to superintend the recruiting service, and made Richmond his H. Quarters, was ready to set into motion five hundred regulars, now fully equipped for their march. Mr. Samuel Lewis, who, in the course of the preceding winter, had been sent to N. Carolina to purchase beeves for the prisoners at Charlottesville, was directed to furnish Gates with such as he might require, and to discontinue further purchases in that quarter, as the American army must now absorb the resources of the adjacent country. In short, no attention, no expence was spared, to forward to the Southern army, every support for which means of transportation could be procured, or to contribute, by any attainable method, to the success of its operations. While Gates was thus pressing the resources of Virginia to his aid, he made a similar appeal to the State of North-Carolina—calling on the Governor to furnish him with tents, flour, and other provisions, and on General Caswell to prepare for a speedy junction of the force under him and Rutherford, with the main army. General Huger had been dispatched on the 19th of July, to the Executive of North-Carolina; and on the 3rd of August, Gates bitterly complained of having received no answer. Depicturing the distressed situation of his army in the most dismal colours, and adjuring the Governor to forward supplies, he emphatically adds: "Depend not, sir, upon commissaries; they will deceive you. Depend only upon honest men, of sound Whig principles, and whose souls are superior to sordid gain." When Gates wrote thus, he was on the West side of the Pedee, near Mark's Ferry. After making at Hillsborough what preparations circumstances allowed, he issued orders to Gen. Stevens, who, on account of his bravery, firmness, and the experience acquired during two campaigns under General Washington, had been entrusted with the command of the Virginia militia, to march to Coxe's Mills, and thence to the grand

Gates joins  
De Kalb,

July 25,



CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

& marches  
towards the  
enemy.

camp of the Southern army. He himself joined at Buffalo Ford, on Deep-River, Baron de Kalb, by whom he was received with joy and respect, and to whom he shewed the most pointed consideration—entreating him to retain the command of his division, as before in the Grand army.—Two modes of advance now presented themselves, equally leading, but not with equal promptitude, into the country possessed by the enemy. One road, which De Kalb had been advised to take, lay to the right, through a country which promised to furnish the army with accommodations and provisions, but it was circuitous, and would have retarded, perhaps, prevented the desired junction with Caswell, now encamped near Colston's. Gates, besides, wished to encourage and support the spirit of the militia on both sides of the Pedee, and contemplated the surprize and conquest of the enemy in their post at George-Town, by means of a strong detachment under General Harrington, whilst he himself should, with the main army, proceed towards Camden. These views, and his still sanguine hopes of approaching supplies, together with his impatience to strike a bold, energetic, and decisive blow, determined him to march by the most direct road, which led through a country of pine barren, sand hills, and swamps; and to the difficulties of which must be added, the baneful effects of the hottest and most unwholesome season of the year.—We trace his route from Coxe's Mills, by Spink's, Cotton's, Kimborough's, Mask's Ferry, Little Black Creek, Anderson's Cross Road, and Lynch's Creek, to Rugeley's Mills, or Clermont, which he reached on the 13th of August. We are thus particular, because this topography alone conveys an idea of the hardships of the route. As he approached the Pedee, and after he crossed it, Gates found the circumjacent country gleaned and exhausted by the troops under Caswell and Rutherford. During the march, the provisions from Virginia, were intercepted and consumed by the militia under Stevens, who formed the rear of the army.—The sufferings of the troops were inconceivable. Bread was almost wholly wanting—green corn, or unripe fruit, supplied its place, animal sustenance was derived only from lean cattle, found nearly wild in the woods. The officers shared every hardship, every want with their men—and moral stimulants, in a great measure, counteracted physical distress. Gates was deeply afflicted at the sight of these complicated and increasing embarrassments. His cry for bread to the States of North-Carolina and Virginia was frequent and loud. The great error of Gates was this premature march through such a country. He ought to have proceeded only after collecting the necessary provisions; or, if these could not be collected, he ought to have followed the route recommended by De Kalb, even at the hazard of the objects which have been mentioned. A little delay could

CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

Is joined by  
Caswell and  
Porterfield.

August 7.

not increase the enemy's force ; but, by rousing into action the ill stifled resentment of the people, who would not have a near prospect of support, it might greatly add to the vigour and effect of the American arms. When once engaged in this desolate, unproductive wilderness, Gates was urged by the most cogent motives to hurry his march through it—and thus were the debilitating effects of fatigue superadded to those of hunger and almost intolerable heat. A junction, however, was happily effected with Caswell and Porterfield. As he approached the Pedee, Gates forwarded to several Colonels of the North-Carolina militia, a circular, in which he announced his advance, and called upon them to join him, with their respective regiments, on the banks of that river. Such as had been obliged to confess a temporary acquiescence under the British government, but had not taken an active part against the friends of America, were promised forgiveness and security, upon their assisting in the deliverance of their country. Those that should maintain a different conduct were to answer for the consequences. These Colonels were authorized to fill up all vacancies by brevet—and likewise to impress supplies for the American army. Harrington was entrusted with the execution of the plan against George-Town. A proclamation found its way through the country, in which General Gates made a forcible appeal to all those principles in human nature calculated to induce the citizens to fly to arms, and wipe away the foul scorn of submission to British tyranny. The concentration of the enemy within Camden, at the appearance of the American army, led Gates to believe that his force was sufficient to drive the insulting foe to Charleston, without the expected reinforcements.—This confidence\* proved fatal to his personal fame, and to the American arms.

From the state of things just described, arose, on the 16th of August, the unfortunate battle of Camden. This battle constitutes a memorable epoch in the history of the Southern war—its effects on this section of the U. States were great and awful. An event so important in itself, and in its consequences, is entitled to the fulness and accuracy of circumstantial narrative. The Governor of Virginia, desirous of conveying to General Washington authentic intelligence respecting that unfortunate affair, collected from the letters of Gates, Stevens, and Governor Nash, and from the verbal relation of an officer† who was in the

Battle of  
Camden.

August 16.

\* From a letter of Gates to Caswell, it appears that he, at first, ascribed the retreat of the enemy from their out posts to intelligence from sea. Another letter written by Major Pinkney to Sumpter, by command of Gen. Gates, expresses the most sanguine confidence of victory, and the dispersion of the enemy.

† Major Magill, Aid-de-Camp to General Gates.



CHAP.  
XVI.

action, a statement which cannot fail to interest Americans. It was transmitted to the Commander in Chief on the 3rd of September.

1780

August 15.

“On the 13th of August,” says the statement alluded to, “General Gates, with the Maryland line, the artillery and North-Carolina militia, arrived at Rudgeley’s, thirteen miles from Camden. He took post there, and was, the next day, joined by General Stevens, with seven hundred of the Virginia militia, Colonel Sumpter was then at the Wax-haws with four hundred South-Carolina militia, and had, on the Sunday before, killed and taken near three hundred of the enemy, who were posted at the flanging-Rock. This and other strokes on their advanced posts, occasioned their calling in all their out posts to Camden. The 15th, General Gates reinforced Colonel Sumpter with three hundred North-Carolina militia, one hundred of the Maryland line, and two three pounders. Colonel Sumpter took possession of all the passes on the Wateree from Elkin’s Ford to ——— Farm, five miles below Camden. At one of these he surprized the enemy’s guard, killed seven, and took about 50, among whom was Col. Cary, their commanding officer, with thirty-eight waggons, loaded with corn, rum, &c.—also a number of horses; and afterwards, on the same day, he took about seventy prisoners. (British) six waggons, baggage, &c. from Ninety-Six. At ten o’clock at night, General Gates’ army marched, intending to take post on an advantageous situation, where was a deep creek in front, about seven miles from Camden, the heavy baggage being ordered to proceed by the Wax-haws road. The march was in the following order: Colonel Armand’s legion in front, supported by Colonel Porterfield (Commander of the Virginia regulars and the light infantry of the militia) on both flanks. The advanced guard of infantry, the Maryland line, with their artillery in front of the brigades, the N. Carolina militia, the Virginia militia, the artillery, &c.—and the rear-guard. After marching about five miles, they met, between twelve and one o’clock, with the enemy under the command of Lord Cornwallis, who had marched out from Camden, about nine o’clock, the same night, intending to attack our camp by surprize, about day-break. This meeting was equally unexpected on both sides, and occasioned a halt of both armies. The enemy’s cavalry then charged Col. Armand’s legion, which was well supported on the flanks by Col. Porterfield’s corps, who repulsed the assailants; but unfortunately, Col. Porterfield had his leg broke in the first fire. The enemy’s infantry then advancing with a heavy fire, the troops in front gave way to the front of the first Maryland brigade, and a confusion ensued which it took some time to regulate: at length the army was ranged in line of battle, in the following order: General Gates’ brigade on the right, with his right close



CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

to a swamp; the North-Carolina militia in close order, two deep in the center, and the Virginia militia in the like order—and Porterfield's corps, with the light infantry on the left; the artillery divided to the brigades, and the first Maryland brigade as a corps de reserve, and to cover the cannon on the road at a proper distance in the rear. Col. Armand's corps was ordered to the left, to support the left flank, and oppose the enemy's cavalry. Their infantry, from a defect in number, were only a single file, five feet apart. In this situation they remained until day-break, when our troops advanced in a line, a few hundred yards. The enemy attacked and drove in our light party in front, and after the first fire charged the militia with bayonets, whereupon the whole gave way, except Col. Dixon's regiment of North-Carolina militia—and their cavalry continuing to harrass the rear, such was the panic diffused through the whole, that the utmost exertions of Gens. Gates, Stevens, Caswell, and others, assisted by a number of officers, to rally them even in small parties, on the advantageous posts at which it was occasionally attempted, were ineffectual. They ran like a torrent, and bore all before them. This shameful desertion of the militia gave the enemy an opportunity of bending their whole force against the Maryland troops and Dixon's regiment of North-Carolina militia.—The conflict was obstinate and bloody, and lasted fifteen minutes. Dixon's militia standing firm with their regular brethren, and pushing bayonets to the last. Superior bravery was, at length, obliged to give way to superior numbers, and this gallant corps compelled to quit the ground. They were then furiously charged by a party of British horse, numbers not known, whom they completely vanquished, insomuch that not more than two of the party are said to have got off. These brave men suffered greatly, having lost, as is believed, one half of their number, and, to their immortal honour, made good their retreat. The waggons were a distance behind. The waggoners cut loose the horses on which they were—the flying militia the rest, and left the waggons. An account of no light authority, says, they were all taken to the number of 400. An officer in the engagement says, however, that not more than 40 were taken; that the enemy never pursued so far as to the place where the waggons were posted; that the cavalry, indeed, did pursue beyond them, but, as the waggons stood without horses, they were unable to carry them off, and that teams were afterwards collected at Charlotte, which were sent, and brought them away safely. We lost eight pieces of cannon—all the ammunition that was with the army, tents, baggage, military chest (*paper*) and nearly all the muskets which were basely thrown away by the militia. The numbers of the enemy are not certainly

CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

known.\* Colonel Sumpter's intelligence made them, on the 15th, one thousand two hundred regulars, and one thousand militia, and a reinforcement of five hundred regulars on their way. It is believed their loss is full five hundred killed and wounded. They retreated immediately to Camden; but sent a party of horse against Colonel Sumpter, who, after he had withdrawn up the Wateree, forty miles, came on him by surprize, cut him off from his arms—retook the prisoners, waggons and other things he had captured. Few of his men were lost, as they fled to the woods. Generals Gates, Gists, Smallwood, Huger, Stevens, Butler and Gregory, are safe. Gen. De Kalb, and Rutherford are missing—the former a prisoner, and mortally wounded, it is said; the latter a prisoner certainly. Colonel Porterfield, an inestimable officer, is said, and we fear too truly, to be dead of his wounds—about one third of his corps escaped. On this defeat, the yeomanry of North-Carolina immediately turned out unsolicited. An army is collecting, which, when our last advices came away, viz. August 23rd, already consisted of between four and five thousand men."

The unexpected meeting of the two armies, in the night of the 15th, was produced by the design of the American General just stated, and by a simultaneous intention of Lord Cornwallis to attack Gates in his encampment at Rugeley's Mills, early in the morning on the 16th. Apprized of the rapid advance of the Americans towards Camden, the British Lieutenant General had left Charleston and re-

\* In the memoranda of Governor Jefferson, for 1780, we find the annexed:

## FORCES ENGAGED, AUGUST 16, 1780.

BRITISH.			
23rd British regiment,	-	-	400
33rd do. do.	-	-	300
71st do. do.	-	-	300
Lord Rawdon's corps,	-	-	350
Tarleton's legion,	-	-	420
Reinforcement from Charleston under Lord Cornwallis	}	-	700
of the 63d regiment of the Hessian corps,		-	
Bryan's and Harrison's new levies,	-	-	600
Total,			3070

Tories incorporated—numbers unknown—but did no damage, having run away at the first fire of artillery.

AMERICAN FORCE.			
Maryland division, reduced by detachments,	-	-	800
Armand's, Porteneld's and Armstrong's corps,	-	-	200
Caswell's North-Carolina militia,	-	-	1,000
Steven's Virginia militia,	-	-	800
Total,			2,800

CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

Gates is defeated and retreats to Hillsborough.

paired to the scene of danger. Finding his situation such as to render a battle, even under disadvantageous circumstances, preferable to a retreat, Cornwallis, never disinclined to the decision of the sword, immediately resolved upon attacking his antagonist. The fate of the gallant and promising Porterfield has already been adverted to. The heroic De Kalb,\* in a vigorous attempt to recover the day, received eleven wounds; and he would have been killed on the spot, had not his affectionate Aid-de-Camp, the Chevalier Dubuysson covered with his own body, the prostrate veteran, and arrested the British bayonets, with which he was himself pierced in this magnanimous effort to save his friend. De Kalb did not long survive: he died six days after, with the praise of his brave troops of Maryland and Delaware, on his quivering lips. Congress decreed to his memory a splendid monument. Stevens, indignant at the unworthy panic of his militia, envied the dying Baron. He had lived too long—for he had lived to see the troops of his native state, in whose exertions he had placed his confidence, on whose gallantry he had built his hopes for the deliverance of the South, shamefully shrink from the assault of the foe, and seek in precipitate flight a safety, to which a thousand deaths would have been preferable. His letters strongly depicture the affliction of his wounded spirit. The perils, the sufferings of the dastardly fugitives moved him not. They had deserved the worst.—There is something irresistibly affecting in the angry pathos of the deserted, disappointed Stevens. He stood on the ground chosen for the dire conflict, himself regardless of any thing but honour and duty, and flushed with high expectations of victory. “My brave fellows,” he cried to his men, as the British were rushing onward, “you have bayonets as well as they; we will charge them.” They heard him not—they listened only to their fears! —“Their conduct he writes, has mortally wounded my feelings;” and again;—“I never shall be reconciled with these fellows, ’till I get them all together again, and put them into a situation where they may wipe off the stain they have brought on themselves and their country, and make some atonement for the distresses that their disgraceful behaviour has occasioned; and, at a time too, when, if they had behaved like men, they might have relieved thousands, and immortalized their own names.”

\* For interesting details concerning De Kalb, see H. Lee's Memoirs, Vol. I. Appendix, page 380. His baggage was saved—conveyed to Philadelphia by Dubuysson who was paroled—put, at the request of the Baron, in the care of Chevalier La Luzerne, and by him transmitted to France. Stevens lost all his baggage. Gates saved his. The British accounts say 1,000 Americans were killed—800 taken—160 waggons taken, &c. &c.

Porterfield languished a long time—and died.



CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

In their flight, they retraced the route by which they had advanced. Stevens returned to Spink's, with a view to collect again the dispersed fugitives. He succeeded in rallying about 700. "We had to retreat, he writes from Spinks August, 20th, upwards of a hundred miles through a country, which may be truly said to be inhabited by our enemies; and before any large party of ours could be collected, the inhabitants rose in numbers, and disarmed the chief part of our men. I am where scarce a friend is to be found." Gates, on the night of the 16th, had retired to Charlotte: but without arms, ammunition, or intrenching tools, he saw the impracticability of maintaining that post; and disregarding the loss of personal fame which would not fail to attend a rapid and distant withdraw, he proceeded to Hillsborough, a place more favourable to a renewal of broken strength, and to efficient preparations for the future. Looking back with bitter anguish at the means lately in his power, and now lost through that precipitation which had hurried him to a decisive action, with troops, most of whom had never seen the face of an enemy, and wanted, of course, that intrepidity and discipline, which are necessary to carry into execution even the best plan—at a moment, too, when the bodies of those troops were debilitated, and their spirits depressed by hunger and fatigue—Gates resolved diligently to repair the wrecked fortunes of the South; and he was greater, perhaps, after his defeat than before. The scattered fragments of the American army gradually collected at Charlotte, where they happily found themselves among friends, eager to relieve their distresses: these distresses were inconceivable. Wounded, hungry, unarmed soldiers arrived in confusion: anguish was in their hearts—despondency in their looks. The inhabitants of Charlotte entreated Major Anderson not to leave them defenceless, exposed to the licentious outrages of the victors, who were expected keenly to pursue the advantage they had gained.—The pre-eminent objects of general safety, induced a further retreat to Salisbury, and thence to Hillsborough. General Caswell, however, remained on the Yadkin, with a body of militia, to cover the circumjacent country. A corps of cavalry was stationed at Cross Creek, and Stevens, with such of the Virginia militia as he had re-assembled, was ordered to Guilford Court House. Few of his men had suffered on the field, owing to their early flight; some of the officers, however, whilst attempting to restore the conflict, were severely wounded. Lieutenant Chew lost an arm. The rest, the better to effect their escape, had thrown away their muskets, and even their knapsacks, and other accoutrements. At Hillsborough, new arms were put in their hands; and the brave Stevens again experienced the cruel mortification of seeing most of his men abandon the ser-

CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

vice of their country. Just before he marched to Guilford Court House, about 400 of them deserted ; and, when at that, his numbers were in a short time reduced to 130. This circumstance induced Gates to order him back to Hillsborough. Informing the Governor of this new dereliction of duty, Stevens expresses his determination to remain at his post, even if all his men should forsake him, and to oppose, at least, his body to the British sabres. Upon information of this almost universal desertion, the Governor required the County Lieutenants to exert themselves in taking the fugitives ; and such was the detestation with which they were received, that, from many counties many went back of themselves. They threw the blame on some of their officers, who, they alledged, had indulged them with furloughs. But this could apply to very few cases ; for, Stevens had peremptorily prohibited officers from thus injuring the service, and no furloughs were valid but those countersigned by himself. Courts martial were held on the offenders, and they were made soldiers for 8 months. Some had been, contrary to the positive injunctions of the Governor and Council, received into volunteer corps : a practice which was soon and effectually checked. Two thousand militia were now called into the field, to serve eighteen months. Hillsborough was the appointed place of rendezvous. Taylor's Ferry, on the Roanoke, was soon after made an intermediate depot. Bodies of volunteers were also raised. Colonel Morgan again took the field. A particular command was intended for him. Gates, who knew the usefulness of that brave officer, again urged his promotion. " I repeat my request to Congress, he wrote to the President of that Body, on the 6th of October, to appoint Colonel Morgan a Brigadier General, not only as his services entitle him to it, but as it will give him a right and conveyance with the militia, that is now absolutely necessary. His separate corps was to consist of cavalry, mounted riflemen, and light infantry, as well Continental as militia. With such a corps, headed by such a leader, Gates hoped to be able to retard and confine Lord Cornwallis's army, until he should be in strength to play a different game. Colonel Morgan served a little while, under Smallwood, now a Major General. Soon the rank which he so eminently deserved, was conferred on him ; and the anticipations of Gates were fully realized. The hardy race of Mountaineers, on and about the Blue ridge, whose affection and confidence the new Brigadier General had always possessed, were now more eager than ever, to be enrolled under his command. Such as were possessed of rifles, carried them along with them. The rest received muskets at Richmond, Taylor's Ferry or Hillsborough. Unfortunately, Virginia wanted arms, tents and clothing for the troops.

His exertions to recreate the army.

CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

The cavalry, now furnished with strong and fleet horses, still called on the Executive for sabres ; and the Executive re-echoed their cry to Congress. A prize vessel from Glasgow was, about this time, brought into Newbern. Some tents and blankets were obtained from the captors ; but this supply was far from adequate. While new reinforcements of militia were then marched to the Southern army, Continental levies were not forgotten. The zealous Muhlenburg was incessantly occupied in forwarding recruits to head quarters. Four hundred of these were annexed to Colonel Harrison's artillerists, who had greatly distinguished themselves in the unfortunate affair of the 16th of August. The want of waggons, and the circuitous navigation between Virginia and North Carolina, while British cruizers infested the Chesapeake, prevented large supplies of maize and flour, from being forwarded to Hillsborough. The arrangement adopted by the Executive, in relation to provisions, was nearly this. The Commissioners for the county of Halifax, Charlotte, Prince Edward, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Brunswick, Sussex, and Southampton, stored the provisions they collected, at any places they thought proper, on the road leading from Richmond to Hillsborough.—For the counties on the Appomattox and James river, Petersburg, Richmond, Williamsburg, Smithfield, Portsmouth, and Hampton, were so many depots. The counties on or convenient to York-river, Rappahannock, and Potomack, stored their supplies at suitable places on those rivers. The Western posts, and the barracks in Albemarle, derived their provisions from some of the counties above the tide waters, and beyond the Blue ridge. The State garrisons were chiefly supported from the collections at the College landing, Portsmouth and Hampton. The Northern and Southern armies, divided the rest in proportion to their wants, and according to the convenience of transportation. The establishment of an intermediate depot at Taylor's Ferry, greatly aided the conveyance of supplies to the South. The departure and return of waggons became regular ; and as losses, so frequent before, were no longer apprehended, many persons constructed waggons for the public service. Commissary Lamb and others were, at the same time, authorized to impress such as they could discover. These details are not unworthy of history, since they contribute to explain the causes of that distress which the armies of America were often doomed to experience. To collect supplies of cattle, agents were employed in the different counties, beginning with those of Princess Anne and Norfolk, and proceeding to others in order, as they stood exposed to the incursions of the enemy—exhausting them as closely as possible.—Such were the exertions of the Executive—at a time when the Treasury of the State was utterly exhausted. Gates,

Zeal of the  
Southern  
States to  
retrieve  
their af-  
fairs.



CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

October 16.

on his way to Hillsborough in July, found it without a single dollar—and it had since remained nearly so. The meeting of the Legislature was anxiously looked for, as new emissions would then replenish it. This resource, frail and precarious as it was, must again be recurred to ; for no other was left. Accordingly, upon their convening in October, the General Assembly, immediately turned their eyes to the exigencies of the Commonwealth. Six millions of pounds were emitted in a new species of bills, for the redemption of which the public faith was solemnly pledged. Three thousand were directed to be draughted for the Continental service. Supplies of clothing for the troops, of cattle, waggons, and other necessary articles, were assigned to each county. Garrison duty was required from pensioned invalids. For officers and soldiers, and the widows or orphans of such as should die in the service, additional provisions was made. Donatives in land were secured to General officers. Seamen received further encouragements, and 3 vessels were armed against the predatory cruizers in the Chesapeake. In the South Western counties, several persons, convicted of practices hostile to the American cause were in confinement, awaiting the penalties decreed by the laws. The General Assembly, wisely preferring mildness to rigor, so far as that mildness was not inconsistent with the public safety, proclaimed a full and free pardon to such of those persons as would tender assurances of repentance for the past, and fidelity for the future—reserving the punishment denounced against traitors for cases of the blackest complexion, and unconquerable malignity.

In the mean time correspondent efforts were making by Maryland and Delaware, now annexed to the Southern department ; nor was North Carolina behind her sister States, in exertions of the same kind. She knew well that the army now forming could alone interpose an efficient bulwark between her and the enemy. In South Carolina, the struggle for liberty had not entirely subsided. That country possessed citizens whose model is found only in those ancient republics, where the *Amor patriæ* was the predominating passion of the heart, or rather absorbed every other passion. Such were Marion in the North Eastern parts of the State, Sumpter in the country between Camden and Ninety Six, Williams and Pickens towards Augusta. Restless and ardent in the cause of liberty, those patriotic individuals, of different ages, manners, and conditions, harmonized in one great and important object, the deliverance of their country from British servitude. When we look at their means we are inclined to despond—but when we view their lofty characters, their invincible perseverance, their genius in planning, and their boldness in execution, we are reminded of the heroic handful

**CHAP.** of freemen at the Thermopilæ, at Marathon, and other  
**XVI.** places sacred to patriotic courage. We anticipate similar  
 results. The Myriads of Persia flee to their ships with  
 disgrace and in dismay.—The triumph of Britain must end  
 also in discomfiture and shame.—The impolitic system  
 pursued by Cornwallis, in the proud moments of victory,  
 greatly contributed to rekindle in South Carolina the flame  
 of opposition. Immediately after the affair at Camden,  
 Cornwallis seemed to emulate the conqueror at Saratoga,  
 in humanity towards his prisoners.\* It is probable that,  
 had he been the carver of his own measures, they would  
 all have been marked with lenity. But General Clinton's  
 proclamation had, as we have related, transformed prisoners  
 on parole into liege subjects, without the participation  
 of their will. The plastic hand of British tyranny, found  
 no difficulty in thus moulding traitors and victims. Pa-  
 roles and protections were understood by the people to se-  
 cure their neutrality, not their allegiance. The first were  
 annulled, and the holders of them called to arms for the  
 support of the royal cause. The second were construed  
 into fealty, to all intents and purposes. Yet, the original  
 condition of those paroles and protections simply was, that  
 the citizens should remain quietly at their homes. The  
 mighty fiat of Sir Henry Clinton having thus made traitors  
 of those who were only enemies, it remained for Cornwal-  
 lis to deal out the penalties which an absurd and cruel fæti-  
 on had decreed. Imprisonment, confiscation, ignominious  
 death by the gibbet, conflagration, now became matters of  
 course. Exile was mercy. The ruthless victors rioted in  
 blood, violence and rapine. They seemed resolved to try  
 how far human patience can go; and eager to subvert by  
 excess the very fabric which their masters intended to  
 raise. The most respectable among the prisoners at  
 Charleston were transferred to the seas of East Florida,  
 under the alledged, but unsupported charge of dishonour-  
 able breaches of their paroles. By an immutable law of  
 the great author of nature, action in a moral, as well as in  
 a physical sense, is always productive of re action, resis-  
 tance always the effect of pressure, and detestation the  
 inseparable attendant of cruelty. Instead, then, of re-  
 conquering South Carolina by terrorism, Cornwallis more  
 irrecoverably alienated her. Why did the British leaders,  
 with a few exceptions, uniformly adhere to this system of  
 conquest by terror and violence? Was it ignorance of the  
 human heart? Was it inbred haughtiness? Stiff and in-  
 flexible pride? Personal or national arrogance? Or did

1780  
 Rigour of  
 Cornwallis.

\* Gates writes to Cornwallis by a flag, August 29th. "I am to thank your Lordship for the attention and tenderness with which Captain Hamilton assures me the wounded and prisoners have been treated. Camden. It has been an invariable rule with me to observe the like generous lenity to all those that have fallen into my hands."

CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

all those causes combine to lead America to Independence through tyranny, to a just and mild government through oppression and bloodshed? Let facts answer the question. But, surely, men who did not exempt even their friends from a wanton abuse of power,\* might fain see that, by creating inextinguishable abhorrence and disgust in the manly breasts of free citizens, they must pull down ultimate ruin on their own heads. Prison ships, contagion, gibbets, insult and oppression of every kind, could, indeed, distress, but they could not subjugate. The very women of South Carolina mocked the proud, relentless conqueror. His balls and concerts were unadorned with their presence. Mourning in secret over the fallen liberties of their country, ministering, like angels of comfort, to the sick prisoners, and clothing the naked, they breathed into their sons, their husbands and brothers, fortitude, perseverance, magnanimity. They sent them into the battles of their country, or saw them dragged into exile, with virtuous resignation. They parted with them, rather than they should themselves part with principle.—Such stimulants, and the heroic examples of Marion, Sumpter, and other partizans, who incessantly, and often successfully, harrassed the British, kept alive the flame of resistance.

Cornwallis  
marches  
from Cam-  
den.

As soon as he had collected proper supplies, Cornwallis, favoured by the season, proceeded from Camden. With a view to awe the patriotic settlements, and to open a communication between the friends of Great Britain in the East, and those in the West of South and North Carolina, he marched the main body of his army through the Waxhaws, while Tarleton followed with his legion, a parallel route, along the Western banks of the Wateree, and Major Ferguson, with a strong corps chiefly of Loyalists, inclined towards the frontiers. The latter was to collect and arm the royal militia on his route; and for this purpose he was accompanied with a convoy of supernumerary muskets and other arms. The march of Cornwallis was uninterrupted; but his flanks occasionally harrassed. At Wahab's, a British party was surprized by the daring Colonel Davie who taking from them ninety horses with their

\* Were it not for the authority of Stedman, a British historian, often mentioned before, we could not believe the subjoined fact:

"The horses were taken out of the waggons, and the (royal) militia harnessed in their stead, drew the waggons through the creek. We are sorry to say that, in return for these exertions, the militia were maltreated by abusive language, and even beaten by some officers in the Quarter Master General's department. In consequence of this ill usage, several of them left the army next morning, forever, chusing to run the risque of meeting the resentment of their enemies, rather than submit to the derision and abuse of those to whom they looked up as friends.—And Stedman, who honourably reprobates this stupid brutality, adds, in a Note:—"So essentially necessary was this unfortunate description of people, that it was impossible to have supported his Majesty's army in the field without them."



CHAP.  
XVI.

1780

equipments, and 120 stand of arms, retired in security. Sixty of the enemy were killed and wounded. All the Americans, except one, were unhurt. The brave Davie, preceding the British army, posted his little band at the Court House in Charlotte and there thrice repulsed the British legion, and for a while kept the whole hostile army at the bay. Cornwallis himself was obliged to ride up to the legion, and press their advance. With a less much inferior to that of the foe, Davie made good his retreat to Salisbury. A striking instance of bravery and enterprise! And to the British Commander an impressive earnest of the spirit of the country! Of that unsubdued spirit, Cornwallis received other proofs. His messengers were interrupted: his foraging parties harrassed, and often cut off; the British could not quit their lines with impunity. At Charlotte, however, Lord Cornwallis was establishing an intermediate post between Camden, and Salisbury, to which he now intended to march, when the unwelcome intelligence of the fall of Major Ferguson, and the captivity of the surviving portion of his men, arrested the progress of the British army, and for a time saved North Carolina from invasion.

Ferguson's  
defeat.

When Georgia had fallen again under the dominion of the British, such of her patriotic citizens as preferred exile to submission, fled into the neighbouring States. Among these was Colonel Clarke, a man of active and daring disposition. Having retired to the South western borders of North-Carolina, he soon attached to himself a number of brave and hardy mountaineers. About this time, the presents with which the co-operation of the Indians was annually purchased by the British, had been collected at Augusta. The hope of a rich prey, combining with the desire of vengeance and of fame, induced Clarke and his followers to march against that town defended by Lieutenant Col. Brown, with a garrison of 150 men. A reinforcement from Ninety Six enabled Brown to ward off the blow of destruction, and the Americans were compelled to retire. Cornwallis, apprized of their retrograde movement directed Ferguson to interrupt their retreat, and for this purpose the latter advanced from Gilbert-Town towards the Mountains. An invisible hand led him to defeat and death. Objects nearly similar to those of Clarke, had drawn together numerous bands of those active, indefatigable, and enterprising sons of North Carolina and Virginia, dispersed over the Western wilds of both these states, and inured from childhood to the stratagem and the toils of the chase. More expert riders, or more skillful riflemen, are scarcely to be found. Under their respective chiefs, Campbell, Cleveland, Williams, Sevier, McDowell, Lacy, Hawthorn, and Hill, bands of eager warriors united against Ferguson. No baggage retarded their march. Every man car-

the real object of this embarkation. He had always believed the object of Sir William Howe to be the command of the upper Hudson, and under this impression, had taken every possible measure to render the station of Peek's Kill inexpugnable. Now apprehensive of a feint, he took a position which alike enabled him expeditiously to extend the protection of his army either to that important pass, or to the City of Philadelphia. A bold and successful attempt by Lieutenant Colonel Barton, with a handful of militia, against Major General Prescott, on whom the command of the British force in Rhode-Island had lately devolved, greatly animated, about this time, the hopes of the Americans. Unobserved by the guard boats of the enemy, Barton and his few attendants passed from Warwick to the western part of the Island, proceeded without loss of time to Prescott's quarters, seized the centinel at his door, and one of his aids-de-camp, took the General himself in his bed, and, with cautious celerity, conveyed him to an American post. Thus was an officer of equal rank with Major General Lee, and likely to be exchanged for him, captured under circumstances nearly similar to those which had placed the latter in the hands of the enemy. This achievement was justly applauded by Congress, the people, and the army.

The belief of Washington that, although the hostile fleet had bent its course to the Southward, still the real object of General Howe was a junction with Burgoyne, on the upper Hudson, had derived new strength from late intelligence of the impetuosity with which the latter pursued his victorious march towards Albany. Early in July, Ticonderoga had been evacuated by St. Clair, without a siege. In its retreat, the American division had been hotly pursued, overtaken, and notwithstanding a most gallant defence, defeated with considerable loss. Fort Anne and Skeensborough were occupied by the enemy; harrassed, broken, dispirited, the troops under St. Clair appeared totally unable to check the triumphant progress of the British. The junction alluded to having thus become more practicable, it was natural to suppose that an attempt towards it would be made by Sir William Howe; yet Washington kept, at the same time, an anxious eye on Philadelphia. The inhabitants of the lowe Counties of Pennsylvania, of Delaware, and of New Jersey, were called to arms, and other preparatory measures taken against eventual invasion, through the Bay of Delaware.

Events on  
the Lakes.

## CHAPTER X.

---

*General transactions in Virginia—Measures against disabled persons and deserters—Arrivals of supplies from France—Meeting of a Scientific society—Beneficial objects of that society—Meeting of the Legislature—Principal acts of this Session—Measures for completing the quota of men for the Continental service—Oath of allegiance prescribed—Continental Loan Office established at Williamsburg—Establishment of another Loan Office for the State—Act to support the credit of the Continental and State paper money—Act against desertion—Provisions against invasions and insurrections—Act relative to the Congressional Delegation from the State—Appointment of Delegates—Thanks of the House given to R. H. Lee—Provisions for the recovery of public money, and for the fulfilment of contracts with Government—other labours of the Legislature—Act in favor of Hampden Sidney Academy—P. Henry is re-appointed Governor—Public Records removed to Richmond—Adjournment of the Legislature—Arrival of the Baron de Kalb, and of the Marquis De la Fayette in America—Proclamation of the Governor against certain dangerous persons—Anniversary of Independence—Washington reinforces the Northern army—Sullivan's excursion into Staten-Island—The British fleet enters the Chesapeake—Active measures in Virginia thereupon—Howe lands below Elkton—Battle of Brandy Wine—Howe enters Philadelphia.*

### CHAP. X.

General  
transactions  
in Virginia.

Measures against disabled  
persons.

And against  
deserters.

Whilst the two armies were thus preludeing to the awful drama to be shortly acted on the banks of the Hudson or on those of the Delaware, the Executive of Virginia pursued, with energetic zeal, the measures sanctioned by the late General Assembly, for the removal of obnoxious persons, and for an adequate augmentation of military force. British merchants, not well affected to the cause of America, were peremptorily ordered to leave the State, and such as failed to comply, in due time, with this order, taken into custody and treated as prisoners of war. The recruiting service was pressed with successful ardour, and desertion subjected to rigorous penalties. Under the influence of mistaken sympathy, or attachment, several persons harboured and concealed individuals who, at so critical a juncture, unblushingly abandoned the banners of their country. On the 24th of April, Governor Henry issued a proclamation intended to crush a practice so nefarious, in a case of voluntary enlistments, and when the



CHAP.  
X.

1777

lives of the citizens, their liberty, and whatever Freemen ought to hold dear, were invaded by an armed force ; directing diligent search to be made for all military fugitives, but, at the same time, opening a prospect of pardon to such as should spontaneously surrender themselves. Energetic regulations were besides adopted, tending to enforce, among the troops, order, discipline, a due respect for property and other civil rights ; in short, a strict adherence to all the duties of their honorable profession. Thus were the fundamentals of military worth, gradually established, by the introduction of regularity, system, and experience ; they made ample amends for those deficiencies which the general state of things did not yet permit to remove.

In the mean time, the public mind was cheered by the appearance, in the principal rivers of the State, of several French vessels loaded with warlike stores. Arrivals of this description were now frequent in different parts of the United States. They resulted either from private commercial enterprize, or from purchases made in France by Dr. Franklin and his colleagues ; such purchases being secretly allowed, and even favoured by the Cabinet of Versailles. From Holland and Spain, various supplies were also procured.—Another circumstance productive of considerable joy and benefit, was the return, about this time, of Colonel Gibson and Captain Lynn, who, in May 1776, had been sent by General Lee to New-Orleans, with a small escort, for the purpose of negotiating with the Governor, the purchase of a certain quantity of gun-powder. Of this valuable article, they now brought to Virginia twelve thousand pounds, obtained on moderate terms. This expedition, which ended so successfully notwithstanding the multiplied dangers of the route, was universally applauded, and soon after liberally rewarded by the Legislature.

Arrivals of  
supplies  
from France

Amid the hurry of revolutionary scenes, and the clangour of war, it is pleasing to behold an homage paid to science. A taste not only for elegant literature, but also for profound research, at that time, prevailed through Virginia. A zealous professor at the University of William and Mary, the learned Dr. Small,\* patronized and encour-

Meeting of  
a Scientific  
Society.

---

\* Dr. Small is a remarkable instance of great individual usefulness. In Virginia, he formed disciples whose light has irradiated several departments of science ; and, on his return to England, having settled at Birmingham as a physician, his application of chemical discoveries to various manufactures, greatly promoted the prosperity of that place. Of that amiable and meritorious professor, the Historian has heard the late Governor Page, and the late Bishop Madison speak with enthusiasm. Mr. Jefferson also expresses the warmest gratitude for Dr. Small's enlightened and affectionate guidance of his studies, when at College. The Dr. was professor of mathematics, and for sometime occupied the philosophical chair. He first introduced into both schools rational and elevated

## CHAP.

## X.

1777

Beneficial  
objects of  
that society.

raged by Governor Fauquier, the ablest character who ever filled the chair of government in Virginia, before the revolution, had chiefly contributed to the diffusion of that taste. The men who possessed it had, most of them, been his disciples. They aimed at higher objects than present gratification or future fame. They fully understood the principle "that national industry is compounded of theory, application, and execution." Pursuits, which to vulgar eyes appear, at best, pure sources of rational amusement, were by those men justly considered as intimately linked with the interests and prosperity of husbandry, manufactures, the arts, and commerce. In the vast extent of their country, they saw boundless fields of research hitherto untrodden. A few natives of the State, possessing, at the same time, a laudable spirit of investigation, and much liberal leisure, had, indeed, explored some favourite spots in this immense region of promise. Scientific travellers, drawn to this side of the Atlantic by an ardent thirst after knowledge, had also examined and described the most prominent of those treasures with which the bounteous hand of nature has enriched the forests, the plains, the rivers, and the mountains of Virginia. But the solitary, unassisted efforts of the former, and the transient attention of the latter, could only produce narrow and unsatisfactory results. Their labours could not embrace a range of discovery sufficiently extensive to benefit mankind in any remarkable degree. The uses, nay, the very names of numberless native productions, still remained unknown. The uniform, unremitted, regular efforts of a zealous and systematic association, were evidently wanted to produce results splendidly and substantially useful. A society was, therefore, instituted, whose commendable objects were, by collecting into a proper focus, the solitary rays of genius and knowledge, which beamed here and there throughout Virginia, to throw some light on several of the Sciences, to render them all familiar to the inquisitive and the studious, and to apply them with skill and efficacy to the perfecting of those arts which might be most essentially serviceable to the country at large. Of this society, Mr. John Page, who with the active patriotism of which we have already related so many proofs, combined eminent scientific acquirements, was now President, and the Rev'd, James Madison, professor of mathematics at William and

---

courses of study; and from an extraordinary conjunction of eloquence and logic, was enabled to communicate them to the Students with great effect. Dr. Small was the intimate friend of George Wythe, and first introduced Mr. Jefferson to the patronage and friendship of that venerable character. Governor Fauquier has been delineated by Mr. Burk.—Suffice it to observe, that Small, Wythe, and Fauquier, were inseparable friends. Mr. Jefferson was soon added to that truly Antic society, whose enjoyments were philosophical conversation, and music.

## CHAP.

## X.

1777

Mary College, acted as one of the Secretaries, and as Curator to the same. For two years past, the meetings of that useful association had been interrupted, partly by the critical state of the country, and partly by the difficulty of convening so large a number of members as was required to constitute a meeting, conformably to certain fundamental regulations. It was, therefore, judged necessary, and resolved by a meeting held at the Capitol, early in May, that for the future seven members, with the President, or Vice President inclusive, might proceed to business, and that a Committee then appointed, should immediately examine and publish such papers as they should judge worthy of a place in their transactions. Several valuable papers on curious and useful subjects, some astronomical observations, and many interesting meteorological journals, had already been given in, and a hope was entertained of soon presenting the whole to the public eye through the medium of the press.—It is to be sincerely regretted that the calls of the war prevented those precious germs from receiving the developement of which they were susceptible. Such an institution, if cherished and nurtured into a proper degree of vigor, would have been attended with the happiest effects. It would have furnished delightful and manly entertainment for its members, diffused abroad a spirit of useful inquiry, stirred up a laudable emulation amongst men of genius, drawn out of obscurity, and brought into action, men of abilities, whose modesty has deprived the world of valuable discoveries, and speculations. in short, by reacting, in a greater or less degree, upon education, manners, and industry, it would have eminently contributed to the dignity of the national character, and to the agricultural and commercial prosperity of the country.

On the 5th of May, the General Assembly met at the Capitol, in Williamsburg. Archibald Cary was chosen Speaker of the Senate; and George Wythe placed in the Chair of the House of Delegates.

Meeting of  
the Legislature.

To this pre-eminent distinction, George Wythe was entitled not only by superior depth and extent of legal and political knowledge, but by spotless purity of virtue, and a devotion to the common cause, both fervent and systematic. Distinguished before the present contest, as a self-instructed scholar and philosopher, as an able, zealous and disinterested advocate, he had become, on the very first movements of the opposition, equally conspicuous as a firm and decided patriot. Actions, not words, characterized the patriotism of George Wythe. No sooner did Virginia call her sons to arms, than he joined a corps of volunteers. Exchanging forensic for martial pursuits, he was seen daily inuring himself to military discipline, and the toils of the field. But, though in need of



## CHAP.

## X.

1777

soldiers, his country still more wanted statesmen and legislators. Her public councils were the proper theatre for abilities like his: there his peculiar usefulness could be exerted to the utmost advantage. Accordingly, the voice of his fellow citizens called him to a seat in the House of Burgesses, over which he presided for some time, with universal approbation. A still more important trust was confided to him, by his appointment to the General Congress, which assembled on the 18th of May, 1775, and assigned to America "a distinct and separate station, among the nations of the world." The honorable task delegated to him, as a member of the Committee of Revisors, brought him back to Virginia; and the City of Williamsburg placed him in the Assembly, of which we now see him elected Speaker. It is worthy of remark that his illustrious pupil and friend, Thomas Jefferson, was associated with him, in all the stages of this patriotic and useful career.

Two striking circumstances distinguish this session—the immense number of petitions laid before the Assembly, and the parental attention bestowed upon them. In all countries, a state of war necessarily produces much private distress; but it is only in popular governments that private distress becomes so peculiarly an object of Legislative concern.

Principal  
acts of this  
Session.

Measures  
for complet-  
ing in Vir-  
ginia, the  
quota of  
men for the  
Continental  
service.

The same session exhibits an unabated activity of military preparation. The better organization and discipline of the militia, were efficiently promoted by judicious and energetic regulations. This was soon followed by *an act for the more readily completing the quota of troops to be raised in the Commonwealth.* Any two members of the militia, in any part of the State, who should, before the first day of October following, procure an able bodied soldier to serve for the term of three years, or during the war, were to be exempted from all draughts whatever, and from other military obligations, during the term for which such a recruit should be enlisted. The recruit himself was entitled to the Continental bounty and other allowances, independently of private gratuities. The arrest of soldiers, in cases of debts, or demands not exceeding fifty dollars, was prohibited by this act. But, not trusting entirely to the effect of the encouragements formerly offered, and those now given, the framers of this act directed a just and equal draught from the militia, in the following manner.

In each military section of the State, on or before the 10th of August, ensuing, the deficiency of men in the quota allotted to that section, was to be ascertained by proper military and civil authorities; and the militia, divided into as many lots as there might be men wanting, to complete the quota required. In forming the several divi-

sions, regard was to be principally had to the number of able bodied men, and to property, so as to observe as far as practicable, a strict equality in respect to both. Each division was to furnish one man. In case of refusal, or neglect, the field officers, jointly with certain magistrates, were to draught those individuals who could best be spared, and promised to be most serviceable. From these allotments scarcely any citizens were exempted; and the men thus draughted were placed, in all respects, upon the same footing as the Continental Regulars.

By the same Act a battalion of ten companies of artillery was directed to be raised. For this purpose the most liberal encouragements were held out—especially, in the provision made for the support and comfortable subsistence of the wives, children, and aged parents of all poor soldiers, during the absence of the latter in the public service.—We have mentioned a scheme of trade for which appropriations had been made in 1776. This afforded further means of excitement for entering the army. All soldiers were to be supplied out of the public store with clothing and other necessaries, at the prime cost, and without any advance whatever, upon directions to that effect from their commanding officers.

An oath of allegiance to the Commonwealth was required from all free-born male inhabitants above the age of sixteen. Recusants were to be immediately disarmed, and, moreover, deprived of all civil rights. Individuals coming from other States into Virginia were called upon to renounce all allegiance to the King of Great-Britain; and a promise was required from them not to do any thing prejudicial to the Independence and interest of the United States.

To carry into effect two resolutions of Congress, for the purpose of obtaining a loan of seven millions of Continental dollars for the use of the United States, a loan office was opened at Williamsburg, and William Armistead appointed to superintend its operations. For the repayment of the sums borrowed, at the end of three years, the faith of the United States was pledged. Specie, Continental paper dollars, or bills of credit heretofore emitted by the State, might constitute part, or the whole, of each sum thus borrowed; and that sum could not be less than two hundred dollars. Certificates were delivered to the lenders, who received upon the same, an annual interest of six per cent.

A desire to prevent the further emission of large sums of paper-money, induced an act for borrowing, on account of the Commonwealth, one million of dollars. G. Webb, or the Treasurer for the time being, was entrusted with the management of this loan, the circumstances of which resembled those of the last case, except that the sums bor-

CHAP.  
X.

1777

Oath of allegiance prescribed.

Continental loan office opened at Williamsburg.

Establishment of another loan office.

## CHAP.

## X.

1777

Act to support the credit of Continental and State paper money.

rowed were not to be less than three hundred dollars each. Severe penalties were enacted to prevent fraud of any kind, in respect both to Continental and State-certificates. In the event of this loan not succeeding, Treasury-Notes were to be issued in dollars, and parts of dollars. The circulation of these notes was enforced by certain regulations; and they were declared redeemable, on the first day of December, 1784.

Congress, aware of the immense and multifarious evils threatened by depreciation, had been solicitously employed in measures, tending to keep up the value of the Continental bills of credit. Among other provisions, they had recommended it to the respective Legislatures to pass laws, declaring these bills a tender in all payment of all debts. The Legislature of Virginia, therefore, passed an act making the bills of credit emitted by authority of Congress current in all payments, trade, and dealings within the Commonwealth. A refusal of Continental or State bills, or a demand of more, in such bills, than in any other species of money, or the exchange of the same for gold or silver below par, was made punishable with forfeiture, extinguishment of interest, and other penalties. Creditors were compelled to receive the tender thus made, and specialties were not to be withheld and secreted, in order to avoid the operation of this law \*—Thus far was the recommendation of Congress complied with by the Legislature of Virginia. That this measure was inadequate to its object will appear in the sequel of our narrative. Opinion, not law, regulates such matters. To the imperious necessity of the times, we must look for the motive of this policy; and acquaint the Legislators of the demoralizing, and, in many cases, individually ruinous operation of the retro-active clause in this act for the legal tender of paper bills. Both Congress and the State Legislatures, at that time, contemplated the redemption of paper-money at par with gold or silver. Hence this law, which a rapid subsequent depreciation rendered partially fatal, whilst it fundamentally promoted the universal good. It was one of those extreme cases which call for extreme remedies. SALUS POPULI SUPREMA LEX ESTO!

Act against desertion.

Deserting had become so frequent as to threaten serious injury to those great interests which now hung on the success of military operation. The Proclamation of Governor Henry against this fatal practice, and its abettors, has already been noticed. The Legislature, justly dreading the consequences of its continuance, adopted vigorous measures for the apprehension of soldiers known or suspected to be deserters. Strict injunctions to that effect were laid

\* See on *Synopsis* in the Appendix



it exonerated Republics, as far as Virginia was concerned from the trite charge of ingratitude. Burgoyne had been denied the presence of his sovereign. Gates was soothed, in his misfortune, by a public testimony of thanks and esteem. The Congress themselves urged his services in another station; but that delicacy "which felt suspicion as a wound," forbade his acting again until the proposed enquiry should have restored to him the confidence of the army. Delays were interposed—and the great scenes of the Southern war had closed, before the hero of Saratoga could consistently with a soldier's principles, resume his sword, and gather fresh laurels. In the modest walk of private life, however, he continued to serve the country of his adoption, with unabated zeal.

CHAP.  
XVI.

---

1780

## CHAPTER XVII.

---

*Incursion of Leslie into Virginia—Removal of the Troops of Concretion from Charlottesville—Further designs of Col. Clarke against Detroit—Determination of the Executive in regard to Hamilton and Hay—Contributions of Virginia, to the Continental establishment—Recommendation of Congress, respecting the Western lands—State of the Northern army—And situation of Congress—Mutinous spirit of some regiments—Plan for giving to Congress coercive powers—Northern campaign—La Fayette returns from France—Arrival of a French armament—Treason of General Arnold—Capture of Major Andre—His condemnation and death—Other events—Holland becomes a party in the war—Armed neutrality—Mr. Laurens is taken by the British—And confined in the tower of London.*

### CHAP. XVII.

---

1780

Incursion of  
Leslie into  
Virginia.

Oct'r. 20th.

Early in September, intelligence was brought to Gen. Gates by spies and deserters, that Lord Cornwallis intended immediately to embark his main force at George Town for Cape Fear, and had pressed from Sir Henry Clinton a reinforcement to take possession of Portsmouth in Virginia, and establish there a strong post. The movements of the enemy announced a contemplated change of position : and whether Cornwallis designed to march into North-Carolina by land, or to invade that State by water, the plan of seizing on Portsmouth for the purposes of support and efficient co-operation, when the main army should act in North Carolina, and advance into Virginia, was highly probable. In effect, the delayed arrival of the second division of the French armament rendered it scarcely practicable to attempt, this year, any thing effectual against New-York, and, of course, put it in Clinton's power to detach to the South a considerable force. General Gates, and the Governor of Virginia communicated to Congress, and to the Commander in Chief, their apprehensions from that quarter. A naval force only could protect the Chesapeake against the expected incursion. A squadron of the French fleet, wintering in any port within the capes of Virginia, would effectually defeat every scheme of the enemy against that State. The measure was solicited—and the convenience and security of the harbours of the Commonwealth, together with the abundant supplies which the counties on the navigable waters were able to furnish, afforded a hope that it would readily be embraced. In the

mean time, engineers were employed in ascertaining the best means of protection against an eventual invader, and in taking the soundings of the principal waters of the Bay. This task chiefly devolved on Colonel Senf, whose usefulness Gates greatly extols in his military correspondence.\* General Gates continued at Hillsborough, until the real views of the enemy should more fully develop themselves. The advance of Lord Cornwallis to Charlotte indicated one part of their plan; and the intelligence which Governor Jefferson received, on the morning of the 22nd of October, completed the certitude of their extensive views of conquest. A British fleet had just appeared in the Bay. It consisted of transports, under the protection of the *Romulous* of 40 guns, the *Blonde* of 30, the *Delight* sloop of 16, a 20 gun ship of the too famous John Goodrich's, and two row-gallies, the whole commanded by Commodore Gayton. The troops on board amounted to about 3,000, some of them cavalry. General Leslie was at their head. Eight hundred of these troops were landed in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth, and some more on the Bay-side of Princess-Anne. On the twenty third, one thousand infantry were put on shore at New-Ports News, and immediately took possession of Hampton. Soon, however, they concentrated their forces in and about Portsmouth, where they began to fortify themselves. Their highest post was Suffolk—and they occupied the narrow and defensible path between Nausemond-River and the Dismal Swamp, so as to prevent the country below from being entered by the Americans. From their movements, it was easy to conclude that they had come with an expectation of meeting with Lord Cornwallis on the borders of North-Carolina and Virginia—that his precipitate retreat, occasioned as we have seen by the fall of Ferguson, had left them without a concerted or definite object, and that they were waiting for further orders. Apprized by the news papers, and by some of the inhabitants, of the retrograde movement of Cornwallis, they sent one of their vessels to Charleston. At the same time, they gave out that, after drawing the force of the State to Suffolk, they meant to go to Baltimore. The following circumstance placed their real object beyond all doubt. A person, of suspicious appearance, endeavouring to pass through the country from Portsmouth towards North Carolina, was apprehended, and a proposal made to search him. He readily consented to be searched, but at the same time, was observed to put his hand into his pocket, and carry something towards his mouth, as if it were a quid of tobacco. This was examined, and found to be a letter, writ-

---

\* Colonel Koschiusko, since so celebrated by his patriotic, though unsuccessful efforts in his native Poland, came, about this time, to the Southern army, as engineer.



CHAP. ten on silk-paper, rolled up in gold beaters skin, and nicely  
 XVII. tied at each end, so as not to be larger than a goose-quill.  
 The annexed is a copy of that letter.

1780

*To Lord Cornwallis.*

MY LORD,

I have been here near a week, establishing a post. I wrote to you to Charleston, and by another messenger by land. I cannot hear with certainty where you are. I wait your orders. The bearer is to be handsomely rewarded, if he brings me any note or mark from your Lordship.

A. L.

*Portsmouth, Virginia, November 4, 1780.*

This discovery verified the conjecture that Leslie expected to meet with Lord Cornwallis in Virginia, or near its Southern borders.

Upon the first appearance of this hostile force, the Executive of Virginia, collected to oppose it, as large a body of men as they could arm. It was to the Governor and every lover of his country, a subject of deep and keen mortification, to think, that a people able and zealous to contend with the enemy, should be reduced to fold their arms for want of defensive weapons. These were again, and more loudly than ever, solicited from Congress and the Continental Board of War. As to aids of men, Virginia asked for none, knowing that if the late detachments of the enemy had made it safe for General Washington to spare aids of that kind, he would not await her application. To this new object however, to divert a considerable part of the reinforcements destined for General Gates, the Executive called to the command of their forces Generals Weedon and Muhlenburg of the line, and Nelson and Stevens of the militia. General Nelson made every exertion in his power to collect the militia of the lower counties, and secure, at least, the important pass at the Great Bridge. The alarm of the inhabitants, whose first care was to secure their wives, children, and moveable property, together with want of arms, rendered his efforts ineffectual. In calling out the militia, the Executive properly omitted those counties, from which Gates might conveniently draw aids of men, should events require such draughts; and likewise the counties exposed by their situation to the inroads and depredations of the foe. General Lawson, a brave Virginian, who beheld with indignant sorrow the State of South Carolina in possession of an insulting and cruel enemy, and whose inbred ardour for fame the noble example of Marion and Sumpter had still increased, was then raising a volunteer corps, with a view to march to South Carolina, and assist in driving the British forces back into Charleston. Five hundred bold and

1780

Nov'r. 15.

adventurous friends of liberty had united under his standard. Their aid was now called in defence of their native State. Stevens, too, was preparing to march to Virginia with a detachment from the Southern army, when, upon the return of the vessel dispatched to Charleston, Leslie abandoned Portsmouth. On the 22nd of November, he steered from the Capes of Virginia for South Carolina, where he reinforced Lord Cornwallis. The conduct of this detachment, whilst in Virginia, was an honourable exception to that predatory system which seemed now to be the only object of the British in continuing the war. The more sanguine their hopes of conquest became, the more obvious was the policy of sparing what they expected would soon be their own. "I must," says Governor Jefferson, in a letter to General Washington, dated, "November 26, 1780, do their General and Commander the justice to observe, that in every case to which their attention and influence could reach, as far as I have been well informed, their conduct was such as does them the greatest honour. In the few instances of wanton and unnecessary devastation, they punished the aggressors." Without enquiring how far the motive above stated, and the firmness of the Executive in the case of Hamilton, might contribute to this moderation on the part of the British leaders, the historian records with pleasure, this glorious deviation from a mode of warfare, which all mankind must abhor. The British left their works at Portsmouth unfinished and undestroyed.—Great numbers of negroes, who had gone over to them were left behind, either from choice or from want of ship room.—The greatest injury resulting from this invasion was the loss of a large quantity of cattle collected in the lower counties for the use of the Southern army, and seized by the enemy immediately after their debarkation. This expedition of Leslie, rather accelerated than retarded the reinforcements destined for Gen. Gates. With other troops, they had been collected by Muhlenburg, at the head of Pagan-Creek, and by Nelson, on the North side of James river.

Another result of this incursion of the enemy, was the removal of the prisoners of war, under the Convention of Saratoga, from Charlottesville. It was impossible, as long as they remained in Virginia, to prevent the hostile army from being reinforced by numerous desertions from this corps: and this expectation was one among the probable causes of the present movement of the enemy. Should a rescue of them be attempted, the partial disaffection which had of late been discovered, and the almost total want of arms in the hands of the well-disposed citizens, rendered the success of such an enterprize by no means desperate. The fear of this, and the dangerous convulsions to which such an attempt would expose Virginia, di-

Removal of the troops of Convention from Charlottesville.

CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

Oct'r. 26.

verted the attention of a very considerable part of the militia of the State, from an opposition to an invading enemy. —Colonel James Wood now superintended the guard of the prisoners. That amiable and meritorious officer, had given to the Executive as well as to those under his charge, the most perfect satisfaction—uniting mildness and liberality with all the cautions which the nature of his task required. It was principally owing to his prudence and good temper, that the difficulties of a period, during which, it was found necessary to substitute the flour of indian corn, for that of wheat, in the diet of the prisoners, and to abridge former indulgences, were passed over almost without a murmur. An order was now issued to him to take immediate measures for removing the troops of Convention to Fort Frederick, in Maryland. Governor S. Lee of that State, was requested to make ample preparations for their reception. They were marched in two divisions. As the whole danger of desertion to the enemy,\* and of correspondence with the disaffected in the Southern counties, was only from the British, Colonel Wood was advised to move them in the first division, and to leave the Germans, from whom no apprehensions were entertained on either head, in their present situation, until a sufficient number of barracks should be erected at Fort Frederick. This momentary separation, dictated by a regard to the comfort of the prisoners, could not, it was supposed by the Executive, be rationally deemed to infringe the Convention at Saratoga. The British were accordingly marched, on the 20th of November, crossed the Blue-ridge at Rockfish Gap, and proceeded along the adjacent valley. The Germans continued longer at Charlottesville. Alexandria was fixed upon as the place to which flag vessels, on matters connected with either division of these troops, should henceforth repair.†

Further designs of Col. G. R. Clarke against Detroit.

December.

The Hannibal of the West. Colonel G. Rogers Clarke, was now in Richmond, urging from the Executive supplies of men, arms, and other implements of war, for the execution of his grand and favorite plan against Detroit. The reasons in favor of that expedition were, at this time, more numerous and more powerful than ever. The enemy had

\* The fears of the Executive on this head, were not ill-grounded. On the 9th of November, some deserters were taken, belonging to the British Convention troops. They had found means to get to Portsmouth, and were, when apprehended, 70 or 80 miles on their way back to the barracks. They were passing under the guise of deserters from Leslie.

† Returns of the troops of Convention at different times :

1777.	Oct. 17th—4,671,	rank and file ;	by Gen. Burgoyne to Gen. Gates.
1779.	Aug. 1st —2,354,	do.	by Gen. Philips to Col. Harvie.
1780.	March 11—2,937,	do.	{ by General Hamilton.
1780.	May 21st.—2,190,	do.	

N. B. Partial exchanges, deaths, desertions, &c. had taken place.



a large army in the South ; they expected there further reinforcements ; and their determination evidently was, to direct to that quarter, the chief weight of their future exertions. The regular force proposed by the Southern department to counteract those exertions, was such, either from the real or supposed inability of the States that composed it, as to allow no very sanguine hope that it might be effectual. It was, therefore, to be expected that the scene of war would soon be either in Virginia, or near its borders, and that the State must chiefly depend on the militia for defence. It was expedient then, to keep as great a proportion of the people as possible, free to act against an Eastern or Southern invader. In the mean time a combination was forming in the West, which, if not diverted, would necessarily call thither a principal and most valuable part of the Virginian militia. From intelligence lately obtained, the Executive had reason to expect that a confederacy of British and Indians, to the number of 2000, was organized for the purpose of spreading destruction and dismay through the whole extent of the back settlements, in the ensuing spring. Should this take place, Virginia must certainly lose, in the South, all aids of militia from beyond the Blue-ridge, besides the inhabitants who would fall a sacrifice, in the course of the Savage irruptions.—There seemed to be but one method of preventing this ; which was to give the Western enemy employment in their own country. The regular force Colonel Clarke already had, with a proper draught from the militia beyond the Alleghany, and that of three or four of the most northern counties, would, in the opinion of that enterprizing officer, be adequate to the reduction of Fort Detroit ; and he assigned the most plausible reasons for that opinion. The Executive of Virginia, therefore, determined to undertake the proposed expedition, and to commit it to the direction of the gallant Clarke. Whether the enterprize should be at Continental or State expence, they left to be decided hereafter by Congress, in whose justice they reposed unlimited confidence. In the mean time they asked the loan of such necessities\* as being already at Fort Pitt, would save time and an immense expence of transportation. The articles thus borrowed, the Executive pledged themselves identically, or specifically to return. General Washington was solicited to issue an order to the Commandant at Fort Pitt

---

\* The reader will no doubt enquire, what the brave Clarke required for his meditated expedition. We therefore, subjoin his list.

Four field pieces, (6 pounders.) 3,000 balls suited to them. 1 mortar. 3,000 shells suited to it. 2 howitzers. Grape shot, with the necessary implements for the above. 1,000 spades. 200 pick-axes. 1 travelling forge. Some boats ready made. Some ship-carpenter's tools. Persons proper to work the mortar, to be in the pay of the State—as Clarke had none such, and none could be had in Virginia.

CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

for the necessaries thus demanded ; and they were not to be called for until every thing else should be in readiness for the contemplated enterprize, after which there could be no danger of their being wanted at the above place. It was hoped the Commander in Chief would find himself justified in lending Virginia this aid, without awaiting the effect of an application elsewhere, as such a delay would render the undertaking abortive, by postponing its execution to the breaking up of the ice in the Lakes. Independently of the favourable effects which a successful enterprize against Detroit, must produce to the United States in general, by insuring tranquility to the frontier of the Northern parts of the Union, and by leaving the Western militia at liberty to aid their Southern brethren, another consideration entitled this request to immediate and cheerful compliance. Virginia had rendered the like service to the States, whenever desired, and almost to the absolute exhausture of her own magazines. The supplies of military stores furnished by her to Fort Pitt itself, to the Northern army, and, most of all, to the Southern, were well known to the Commander in Chief\*. With sanguine hopes, therefore, Colonel Clarke awaited the answer of General Washington, impatiently anxious to enter upon an enterprize, the success of which would crown his wishes and his fame. The hostilities brought, immediately after this, into the very heart of the State, and some other circumstances which will be adverted to, unfortunately opposed its execution. Once more, the hardy warrior, though panting after the destruction of the foe in his boasted citadel, was obliged to confine himself to defensive operations. But, before his return to the West, we will see him displaying his unconquerable spirit against the parricide Arnold, on the banks of James-river.

Determina-  
tion of the  
Executive  
in regard to  
Hamilton  
and Hay.

This year, in conformity with regulations to that effect, the prisoners of war in Virginia, were delivered up to the Continental commissary, except Governor Hamilton and Major Hay. The influence of Hamilton with the Indians, his activity, and malignant zeal against America, and the no less malignant subserviency of his satellite, Hay, to all his bloody projects, had induced the people of Kentucky to send to the seat of government, a deputation for the special purpose of requesting that these two prisoners, who had insolently threatened them with implacable vengeance, should not be liberated. The Executive had promised not

---

\* The ratification of the Confederation had been rested on the cession by Virginia, of part of her claim to the Union ; and it was believed this cession would be made, as it really was afterwards, to a greater extent, perhaps, than policy required.—Far, therefore, from obtruding an improper request in this case, the Executive might properly have demanded that the expedition should be wholly at Continental expence.

to part with them. Lieutenant Colonel Dubuysson, aid de Camp to the unfortunate Baron de Kalb, came to Richmond on his parole, with an offer from Lord Rawdon, to exchange him for Hamilton. Colonel Towles was permitted to visit Virginia, likewise on his parole, with a similar proposition in respect to himself, very strongly urged by General Phillips. These and other overtures, did not lessen in the opinion of the Executive, the importance of retaining Hamilton, and his worthy compeer. One circumstance, indeed, would have procured the release of these prisoners—we mean the absolute impracticability of establishing a cartel without the consent of the States to submit their separate prisoners to its obligation—in this case Virginia would have yielded Hamilton and Hay, rather than be an obstacle to a general good. Upon a representation, however, by Colonel Towles, that an indulgence to Governor Hamilton and his friend to go to New-York on parole, would produce the happiest effect on the situation of the American prisoners on Long-Island, the Executive thus far relaxed from their determination. Rocheblave, the former Governor of Kaskaskias, had long before broken his parole, and made good his escape to New-York.

Whatever has a tendency to shed light on the situation of Virginia, in those critical times, and to shew in what relation she stood to the confederacy, by those aids which her resources enabled her to furnish against the common enemy, cannot fail of interesting the American reader. We, therefore, subjoin several documents, which, when surveyed by a comprehensive eye, may afford a satisfactory view of the efforts and of the State of the Commonwealth, during a period of difficulty, hazard, and lassitude, but of unabated patriotism in the body of the people, and the rules of their choice.

Contributions of Virginia to the Continental establishment.

*The Governor of Virginia, to the President of Congress.*

“Richmond, July 27, 1780.

“Sir—According to the desire of Congress, expressed in their resolution of the 17th ult. I shall endeavour to inform them what has been done by this State, in consequence of the several resolutions there referred to.

1779 } needm-  
March 9. } menda-  
tion to the States, to  
complete their res-  
pective quotas of 80  
battalions.

The Assembly, at their session in may 1779 (being the 1st after the recommendation of March 9,) desirous not only of furnishing their quota of troops then wanting, but of providing permanent means for keeping up the same by voluntary enlistments, passed an act for appointing a recruiting officer to be resident in every county, whose occupation it should be constantly to endeavour to en-



CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

1780 } U. States  
Feb. 9. § to furnish  
their respective defi-  
ciencies of 35,211  
men, on or before the  
1st of April.

May 20. The Uni-  
ted States to forward  
their quotas of troops  
to join the Continen-  
tal army.

list, within his county, soldiers to serve during the war. That the officer might be industrious, he was allowed a premium of 150 paper dollars, then worth 12 1-2 hard dollars, for every man he enlisted: that the people within the county might encourage the recruiting service, they were to have credit, in any future draughts, for all the men their recruiting officer should raise; and every soldier was to receive 750 paper dollars, then equal to 62 1-2 hard dollars, the advantage of laying out his paper in the public store at the hard money prices, and the other usual donations of clothes and lands. These encouragements, however, did not fully answer our expectations. The Assembly therefore, at their next Session, in October 1779, took supplementary measures for raising their quota by endeavouring to re-enlist for the war their soldiers, whose time of service would expire within the ensuing year. This essay also failed to produce our quota of men, even as settled in the resolution of February 9, 1780. The Executive therefore, immediately ordered the whole of their troops, which had been reserved for the particular defence of the State, to join the Continental army to the Southward. That some idea may be formed of the proportion of their quota which this addition effected, I beg leave to refer you to the enclosed statement No. 1\* made out from the returns therein referred to, which have been made to me; their dates being from October 13, 1779, to March 5, 1780, except as to the State troops ordered into service as above, whose numbers are entered, as they marched the 2d of May following. —To these may be added something upwards of 300 new recruits then engaged for the war; of whom no return having been regularly made, they are not entered. The Assembly, which met in May of the present year, passed one act for sending 2,500 militia into the field, which has been carried into execution; and another for raising by way of draught, one fifteenth of the whole number of our mi-

1779 } U.States  
May 21. } called  
for a tax of \$45,000,  
000, in addition to  
what was called for  
on the 2d January, to  
be paid 1st January  
next.

September 13.  
Circular letter. a-  
mong other things,  
stating the necessity  
of paying into the  
Continental treasury  
the monies called  
for, and of adopting  
measures to bring  
their respective quo-  
tas of troops into the  
field early next cam-  
paign, & provide the  
supplies necessary in  
the course of it.

1779

October 6—7.

U. States to collect  
and pay into the Con-  
tinental Treasury,  
their respective quo-  
tas of \$15,000,000,  
monthly, from Janu-  
ary, inclusive, to Oc-  
tober.

1779

October 9.

Circular le ter, ur-  
ging the necessity of  
punctual payment of  
the quotas.

1780

March 18.

Sundry resolutions  
for calling in the  
bills in circulation,  
and emitting new  
bills on certain funds.

litia, which, after all probable deducti-  
ons, they count upon as 3,000 men.—  
'These are to serve as regulars, 'till De-  
cember 31, 1781, and will be rendez-  
voused about the last of the ensuing  
month.

' By the resolution of January 2d, Virgi-  
nia was to pay for the year 1779,

\$2,400,000—1,720,000

For the year 1781.—1,000,000— 300,000

By the resolution

of May 21st, we

were to pay be-

tween Feb. 1st.

and Octob'r 1st.

} 7,200,000--2,160,000

Making in }  
the whole, }

\$10,600,000—1,3,180,000

' I beg leave to refer you to inclosed No.  
2.\* a very imperfect state of our disburse-  
ments for the Continent ; whenever the  
books of our Auditors shall be put under  
a proper course of examination, many o-  
ther articles of expenditure for the Con-  
tinent will, doubtless, be found, which  
have escaped the present hasty exami-  
nation. By this sketch, it appears that  
we have answered for the Continent,  
since May 21, 1779, 1,4,404,440 13s.—  
\$13,681,368 5-6. There are still out  
considerable warrants, which we have  
assumed—some of them partly unpaid—  
some wholly so.

' The assembly was sitting when the re-  
solution of October 6—7 came to hand—  
passed acts for increasing the public tax-  
es, and for borrowing money, in order to  
enable the State to comply with the re-  
quisition of Congress. The subsequent  
resolutions, however, of March 18, 1780,  
as to the same money, having rendered  
it necessary for the Assembly to make a  
corresponding change in their measures,  
they passed at their late session, an act,  
which I transmit to Congress, (this was  
an act for calling in and redeeming the  
State's quota of \$200,000,000, emitted  
by Congress, &c.) assuring them at the  
same time, that the moment I can receive  
authentic information, that five other  
States shall have acceded to the resoluti-

CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

1780  
May 19.  
The State from N. Hampshire to Virginia inclusive, to pay into the Continental Treasury 10,000,000 of dollars in 30 days.

1779  
December 21.  
Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Connecticut, to furnish certain quantities of flour and Corn by the 1st of April.

1780  
February 25.  
United States to furnish their respective quotas of specific supplies mentioned.

ons of March 18th, this act shall be put into a course of execution.

‘ This requisition could not be complied with in point of time, for reasons before explained to your Excellency. On the 30th of June, 1780, we sent on in money and bills \$1,430,239 8-9. We are still to send on \$522,960 1-9. to make up our whole quota of \$1,953,200, unless the resolution of June 17, was meant to appropriate this requisition to the military chest in the Southern department.— There is no other balance due from this State, whereon that resolution can operate, as will be perceived by my observations on the resolutions of May 21. On this head I pray instructions from Congress.

‘ It is not in my power to state with accuracy, what is done towards furnishing these supplies. Extensive orders have from time to time been given out, which have been carried, and are still carrying into execution; but no returns are made which enable me to say what is precisely done. On the receipt of the resolution of December 21, notice was given to the Continental Quarter Master, that we should be ready to give him orders for the grain which was then coming in, under an act of assembly that had laid a specific tax on grain. What could be the amount of this was not then known. We find now that what we allotted to Continental use amounted to about 80,000 bushels of short forage. Part of this had been received, and the rest we are collecting for the Continental Quarter Master and Commissary, to the posts recommended by General Washington. This, no doubt, is counted in part of the subsequent requisitions of February 25th. Large orders are out for the purchase of beeves. Considerable quantities of specifics have been furnished to the troops marching to the Southward. Our endeavours, indeed, have been much disappointed by the insufficiency of our revenues to answer these, and the calls for money for other purposes. Our ultimate dependence for supplying deficiencies in the articles of meat, flour, salt, short forage, and rum, is on an act of the Legislature herewith transmitted.



A specific tax in tobacco is payable on the 31st December next. Of this about 3,725 hogsheads were appropriated as a fund whereon to borrow money, under the calls of Congress of October 6 and 7, 1779. But another provision for this being made by the act to which I have before referred, these tobaccos remain unappropriated, and, of course, free to be applied by the Assembly, according to the requisitions of February 25. They will have brought in, under the same specific tax, as much as would make up the residue required. Whether they may think proper to change the appropriation of it for this purpose, or how otherwise they will furnish it, is for them to determine.

‘It would have given me great pleasure, to have been able to shew Congress that all their requisitions had been complied in this State, with regularity in time, quantity, and every other circumstance. It will, doubtless occur, that some of the requisitions were difficult in their nature ; that others were new in experiment ; and all of them on as large a scale as the people think themselves equal to. In States more compact, experiments, though new and difficult, are made with promptitude ; their defects soon discovered and readily supplied. In those of greater extent, they are carried into execution with less vigour and punctuality ; and the time for complying with a requisition, expires frequently before it is discovered that the means provided, were defective. The time necessary for convening the Legislature of such a State, adds to the tardiness of the remedy ; and the measure itself, is so oppressive on the members. as to discourage the attempting it but on the last emergencies. These and other considerations will readily occur to Congress ; and will refer to their true cause. any inaccuracies which may have happened in the execution of their desires.”

\* No. 1—Referred to in the preceding Document. (Page, 426.)

State of the Virginia forces in Continental service, including the Rank and File, and non-commissioned officers, only.

Marched or ordered to S. Carolina.	Enlistments for terms not specified in the returns.	Enlistments for the war.	Total counted as of the Virginia quota.	Enlistments, expiring between date of returns and September 30, and therefore not counted as of the Virginia quota.
Infantry with the main army, including the 1st and 2d state regiments, as by return from General Washington, of December 26, 1779.	181	1456	1637	1377
Colonel Gist's regiment, as by Colonel Cabell's return, of October, 1779.	53	70	123	99
Recruits sent to the Southward under Gen Scott, as by his return, Nov. 18, 1779.		1002	1002	
Colonel Porterfield's detachment of Infantry to South Carolina, as by his return, May 2, 1780.	134	84	218	•171
Colonel Harrison's regiment of Artillery, as by General Washington's return, December 26, 1779.	4	81	85	129
Colonel Hazen's regiment, as by return from Continental War Office, Feb. 23, 1780.			12	
Major Caleb Gibb's corps of Guards, as by return of War Office, February 23, 1780.			37	
Virginia Troops at Fort Pitt, as by return from General Washington, of November, 1779.			308	100
Colonel Taylor's regiment of Guards to Convention troops, enlisted during the stay of the prisoners in Albemarle.				
Colonel Moylan's Horse, as by letter from General Washington, of February 16, 1780.		297	297	
Two troops of Major Nelson's Horse, detached to South Carolina under Colonel Porterfield, returned May 3, 1780	23	41	63	
Reid's troop of Major Nelson's Horse with the Convention troops, Albemarle.			64	
Colonel Baylor's Horse, (exclusive of those in North Carolina at the date of return) as by return, October 13, 1779.		29	29	
Colonel Bland's Horse—no return—but said by Commanding Officer to be about			138	
Major Lee's Horse, as by letter from General Washington, March 5, 1780.			140	
			52	
Scott's Brigade to serve through the Campaign of 1780.	395	2029	4205	1877

• These enlistments not to expire 'till August and September, 1780.

\* No. 2. Referred to in the foregoing--(Page 427)  
 Monies answered for the Continent, from May 21, 1779, to  
 July 19, 1780.

### QUARTER-MASTER'S DEPARTMENT.

1 Charles Pettett	-	-	-	-	l. 294,000
2 William Finnie	-	-	-	-	750,000
3 George Elliott	-	-	-	-	735,000--13 s.
4 Steven Southall	-	-	-	-	196,442
5 Gressit Davies	-	-	-	-	10,800
6 Richard Young	-	-	-	-	10,000

### COMMISSARY'S.

7 Chaloner & White	-	-	-	-	705,000
8 Robert Forsyth	-	-	-	-	173,200
9 Ephraim Blair	-	-	-	-	450,000

### OTHER PURPOSES.

10 Ambrose Gordon, to recruit	-	-	-	}	20,000
Baylor's Regiment	-	-	-		
11 John White & Joseph Gray, by	-	-	-	}	90,000
warrant Feb. 12, for George	-	-	-		
12 Joseph Carleton, P. M. Board of War	-	-	-	-	80,000
13 Jonathan Burrell, Asst. P. M. General	-	-	-	-	3,000
14 Maj. Galvan in part of warrant,	-	-	-	}	3,000
B. Harrison	-	-	-		
15 Ditto by order on Sheriff of Norfolk	-	-	-	-	3,000
16 Different officers, to subsist militia on	-	-	-	}	29,890
their march to the Southward	-	-	-		
17 Brig. Gen. Stevens for military chest	-	-	-	-	125,000
18 Daniel Call, to purchase horses for	-	-	-	}	28,808
Washington & White	-	-	-		
19 William Claiborne for ditto	-	-	-	-	5,000
20 Miles Seldon for ditto	-	-	-	-	32,300
21 Commissioners in the several counties,	-	-	-	}	662,000
for ditto, (not exactly known)—about	-	-	-		

Amount of the requisitions of Congress 4404,440--13 s.  
3180,000

Overpaid £ 4081,368 1-6 l. 1224,440 13 s.



**CHAP.  
XVII.**

**1780**

Recommendation of Congress, respecting the Western lands.

Sept'r. 6.

Thus did Virginia bear with alacrity her full share of the common burthen. A new and immense sacrifice was reserved for her. The remonstrance of her Legislature, respecting her Western lands, had been referred to a special Committee of Congress. On the report of that Committee, a resolution was passed, recommending it to such States as had unappropriated lands in the West, to pass such laws, and give to their Delegates such powers, as might effectually remove the only obstacle to the final ratification of the articles of confederation. The assent of Maryland to that solemn compact, was, at the same time, most earnestly urged. At the commencement of October, another resolution announced that the ceded Territories should be disposed of for the common benefit of the Union—to be settled and formed into distinct republican States.—New York gave the example of the long wished for donative; and the expediency of a similar cession on the part of Virginia, now gradually gained ground, even with the most strenuous advocates of her claims. They reflected on that extent of Territory which is most favourable to the purposes of vigorous government; on the difficult and precarious tenure of the Illinois country, at a time, when war threatened the very heart of the State; and, especially, on the importance of drawing more closely together the component parts of the confederacy, by the final assent of all to an instrument, which, notwithstanding its many imperfections, was considered as the rock of American salvation.—These and other influential considerations, forced their way into the minds of the people of Virginia; and, joined with their noble devotedness to the common good, prepared the generous cession of the lands West of Ohio, which it will soon be our task to record.

State of the Northern army.

If from the disasters in the South, we turn our eyes to the state of the Northern army, in 1780, we find the prospect there scarcely less gloomy and alarming. The operations of General Washington were cramped by embarrassments, which did not allow him to undertake any thing against New York, although the severity of the winter deprived that City of the advantages of an insular situation, by making rivers and even arms of the sea passable upon the ice. The numbers in and about Morristown were not adequate to a decisive blow; and, had they been so, their distresses from an almost total want of necessaries, would have paralyzed their strength. Among the various conjunctures of peril and difficulty, which had arisen in the course of the revolution, none could be singled out more truly critical than the present. The army threatened with an immediate alternative of disbanding, or living on free quarter—the national Treasury empty—the public credit exhausted—nay, the private credit of purchasing agents employed as far as it would bear—Congress complaining

of the extortion of the people—the people of the improvidence of Congress—and the army of both.—The affairs of the Union requiring the most mature and systematic measures, and the urgency of occasions admitting only of momentary expedients—and these expedients generating new difficulties—Congress, from a defect of adequate Statesmen, likely to fall into wrong measures, and, from impotency, unable to enforce right ones—recommending plans to the several States for execution, and the States separately rejudging the expediency of such plans—whereby the same distrust of concurrent exertions that had damped the ardour of patriotic individuals, must produce the same effects among the States themselves—an old system of finance discarded\* as incompetent to the public necessities—an untried and precarious one substituted—and a total stagnation in prospect between the end of the former and the operation of the latter. As things stood, nothing apparently could save America, but vigorous measures in the States to collect the old money, and establish funds for the credit of the new; and let them be ever so expeditious in promoting the proposed scheme of finance, still the intermediate distress to the army, and hindrance to public affairs, was a melancholy subject of reflection. The draughts on the States for the unpaid requisitions afforded only a feeble and partial relief, as the discharge of sums due from the purchasing departments, absorbed a great proportion of them. As soon as these draughts amounted to the whole of the monthly requisitions, up to the end of March, they entirely ceased, according to the new scheme of finance; and the only reliance of Congress, was on the new emissions. In this crisis, the Legislature of Connecticut gave a noble example. They took the most efficient measures to supply their quotas of money and specifics; and a body of the principal merchants of that State, associated for supporting the credit of the new-paper, and for that purpose, in a public address, pledged their faith to the Assembly, to sell their merchandize on the same terms for it as for specie. But this patriotic zeal was not extensively imitated. As to specific supplies, they rendered indeed, much less money necessary, than would otherwise have been wanted; but the distresses of the army were so pressing, and the exertions of the States so far from unanimous, that they could not afford relief in time, and to the extent required. Be-

---

\* See the resolution of October, 1779, for not issuing beyond 200,000,000 of dollars; and that of the 18th of March, 1780, for calling in those 200,000,000 of dollars (old emissions) at the rate of 20 for 1—emitting then 10,000,000 of new bills, redeemable in specie, within six years, and to bear an interest of 5 per cent, &c. &c. See also the scale of depreciation formed by Congress, to apply to Loan-Office certificates—which reduced the principal of loans from 46,559,235 dollars, to 11,053,573 dollars.

CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

And situation  
of Congress.Mutinous  
spirit of  
some regi-  
ments.

sides, as the ability of the people to comply with the pecuniary requisitions, was derived from the sale of their commodities, it was very evident, that a demand on them for the latter, must make the former proportionally more difficult and defective. The situation of the Congress had now undergone a total change. So long as they exercised the indefinite power of emitting money on the credit of their constituents, they had the whole wealth and resources of the Continent within their command, and could go on with their affairs independently, and as they pleased. Since the resolution passed for shutting the press, this power had been entirely given up, and they were, at present, as dependent on the States, as the King of England on his Parliament. They would neither enlist, pay, nor feed a single soldier, nor execute any other purpose, unless adequate means were first placed in their hands. Should the Legislatures of the several States, not be sufficiently attentive to this change of circumstances, it was obvious that the political machine must suffer a material derangement, or rather come to a total stop. Of this the state of the army already presented a melancholy proof. Every week, or rather every day, brought to Congress a lamentable picture from Head-Quarters. The troops were a great part of their time on short allowance, and sometimes without any allowance at all, and constantly depending on the precarious fruits of momentary expedients. General Washington found it extremely difficult to repress the mutinous spirit engendered by hunger and want of pay. All his endeavours could not prevent the actual eruption of that spirit in two Connecticut regiments, who assembled on the parade with their arms, and resolved to return home, or to satisfy their hunger by the force of the bayonet. It was, in this crisis, that the patriotic ladies of Philadelphia and other places, made, for the relief of the suffering defenders of their country, those generous contributions to which we have alluded in a former part of this narrative. The opulent merchants of that city also subscribed £ 3,000,000, the immediate object of which was to procure and transport to the army, 3,000,000,000 of rations, and 300 Hhds. of rum. For the security and indemnification of the subscribers, Congress pledged the faith of the United States, and agreed to deposit bills of exchange in Europe, to the amount of £ 150,000 sterling, which were not, however, to be made use of, unless other means of discharging the debt should prove inadequate.

The wily foe beheld with secret exultation this distress and its effects ; nor did he leave unessayed any of those arts which he thought calculated to increase discontent, and produce the entire dissolution of the army. Printed papers were circulated in the American camp, exaggerating the miseries of the troops, inviting them to quit their



leaders, and join their real friends, the British, who would receive them with open arms, and kindly forgive their errors. Gold, abundance of every thing that is desirable to soldiers, and, if they should not chuse to bear arms, the liberty of disposing of themselves as they pleased, were insidiously offered. Vain attempt! Hunger and nakedness were, indeed, intolerable to the American soldiers, because intolerable to men; but their love of country, and their attachment to a General, whose constant solicitude and efforts to relieve their wants, they well knew, defeated the hopes of the enemy, and dispelled the fears of Congress. That Body had again adopted the expedient of sending a Committee of their own members to the camp of the main army, with ample powers, in concert with the Commander in Chief and the Heads of the Departments, to reform the various abuses which had crept into the military system, and to make such arrangements as would guard against a relapse into them. In calculating the difficulties which America had to overcome to arrive at Independence, posterity will not forget the want of pecuniary funds, and of energetic and adequate systems for the supply of large armies.—Formidable as her enemies were by their bravery, their discipline, their numbers, she had less to fear from their arms, than from want of regularity and compactness in the disposal of her own means, and from the absence of a controlling power and coercive authority in Congress over the States, sufficient to compel obedience to requisitions for men, money, and supplies, apportioned agreeable to the rules already established. These defects, which ultimately led to the adoption of the present form of government for the union, were even then clearly perceived, and sensibly felt. When, early in 1781, the confederation of the American States was completed by the assent of Maryland, an effort was made to apply the proper remedy by arming Congress with coercive powers. By the 13th article of the confederation, a General and implied power was, indeed, vested in Congress, assembled to enforce and carry into effect all the articles of the said confederation, against any of the States which should refuse or neglect to abide by the determinations of a majority of them, or should otherwise violate any of the said articles; but no determinate and particular provisions was made for that purpose. It was, therefore, proposed to recommend it to the Legislatures of the several States to authorize their Delegates in Congress to subscribe, as an additional clause to the 13th article of confederation, a clause authorizing Congress to employ the force of the United States, as well by sea as by land, to compel delinquent States to fulfil their federal engagements.—To exercise this compulsive power, should Congress be invested with it, several means presented themselves. As long as

Plan for giving to Congress coercive powers

CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

there was a regular army on foot, a small detachment from it acting under civil authority, would, at any time, render a voluntary contribution of supplies due from a state, an eligible alternative. But there was still a more easy and efficient mode. The situation of most of the States was such, that two or three vessels of force employed against their trade, would make it their interest to yield prompt obedience to all just requisitions on them. With respect to those States that had little or no foreign trade of their own, all intercourse between them and such States as supplied them with foreign merchandize, might be interdicted—and the concurrence of the latter enforced, in case of refusal, by operations on their foreign trade. The necessity of arming Congress with such powers was evinced by multiplied circumstances—by none more so than by the delinquencies of some States most capable of yielding their apportioned supplies—and the military exactions to which other States, already exhausted by the enemy and the American troops themselves, were in consequence exposed. Without such powers, too, in the general government, the whole confederacy might be insulted, and the most salutary measures frustrated by the most inconsiderable State in the Union. Of this a striking instance had occurred. At a time when all the other States were submitting to the loss and inconveniency of an embargo on their exports, Delaware absolutely declined coming into the measure, and not only defeated the general object of it, but enriched herself at the expence of those who did their duty.

This attempt to cement and invigorate the federal Union, and to render it more effectual in securing its immediate object, was wise and salutary. Yet, it was relinquished. Apprehensions were entertained, lest it should excite jealousy—and fear of a disposition in Congress to grasp at dangerous powers. It was likewise contemplated to place the great Executive departments of the Union, under the superintendence of ministers, accountable for their conduct to Congress, and amenable to a high Federal court, which it was intended to organize. This last idea was beneficially applied, in 1781. to several departments, by substituting individual agents for committees and boards.—But other branches of desirable reform were vainly urged. Time and experience had not yet fully demonstrated to the mass of the people the defects of the original articles of Union: and sufficiently pressed on their minds the necessity of applying adequate remedies. The progress of salutary ideas is always slow—their triumph often difficult. The great work of a Federal Constitution which would, without encroaching on the vital rights of the several States, free the general government from its imbecility and impotency, during the present period, was reserved for years of peace and security; and the enlightened Statesman, in whom



the above clause\* originated, was destined to bear, in framing and advocating that Constitution, a share alone sufficient to immortalize his name.

In viewing the relative situation of the two armies, the one enfeebled by considerable detachments—the other labouring under the distresses which we have just sketched, we are led to anticipate what really happened—a campaign, barren of important and decisive events. The surprise of an American post by the British, near the White Plains—an incursion from New York into Jersey, and in that incursion, numerous instances of rapine, conflagration and slaughter, among which the melancholy fate of Mrs. Caldwell claims a sad distinction, and some other desultory operations, constitute almost the whole history of the Northern campaign in 1780, to which, however, must be added, a successful enterprize of Lord Sterling against Staten-Island.—A more prominent occurrence was the arrival at Rhode Island of a French armament consisting of 7 ships of the line, 5 frigates, and a number of transports, having on board 6,000 troops. The Chevalier De Ternay directed the naval, and Count De Rochambeau the military force.

Firmly adhering to a cause which he had ardently embraced, the gallant La Fayette had obtained from his Government permission again to devote his sword to America. He had done more. Representing to the magnanimous Louis and his Ministers, the situation of the United States, their noble and protracted struggle against Great Britain, the policy as well as the glory of increasing their means to maintain and terminate that struggle, he had procured a promise that his return to America should be speedily followed by an armed force. With this welcome intelligence, he reached Washington's Head Quarters in the

CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

Northern  
campaign.

La Fayette  
returns  
from  
France.

May 12.

\* The clause alluded to was contained in a report from a Committee, before Congress, April 16, 1781.—It originated, we believe, in Mr. Madison, and ran thus :

"It is understood, and hereby declared that, in case any one or more of the confederated States shall refuse or neglect to abide by the determinations of the United States in Congress assembled, and to observe all the articles of the confederation, as required by the 13th article, the said United States in Congress assembled, are fully authorized to employ the force of the United States, as well by sea as by land, to compel such State or States to fulfil their federal engagements ; and particularly to make dis-tstraint on any of the effects, vessels, and merchandizes of such State or States, or of any of the citizens thereof, wherever found, and to prohibit and prevent their trade and intercourse as well with any other of the United States and the citizens thereof, as with any foreign State, and as well by land as by sea, until full compensation, or compliance be obtained, with respect to all requisitions made by the United States in Congress assembled, in pursuance of the articles of confederation."

"And it is understood and is hereby agreed, that this article shall be binding on all the States, not actually in possession of the enemy—as soon as the same shall be acceded to, and duly ratified by each of the said States."



CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

Arrival of a  
French ar-  
mament

July 10.

spring. To him and to Congress only, he was authorized to communicate the contemplated aid. Pecuniary succours had also become probable. Although the army and the people remained some time ignorant of this last and important service of the Chivalrous La Fayette, they hailed his return with enthusiastic affection. He had long secured to himself an elevated seat in their hearts. Congress also conferred upon him new and splendid marks of their esteem.

De Ternay and Rochambeau reached the coast of America early in July. Contrary winds had delayed their arrival, the armament having sailed from France on the first of May. Rochambeau counted among his officers, many distinguished noblemen, who had earnestly solicited the honour of serving in America. Impatient of repose, fired with the hope of humbling the common enemy, and of avenging at once their country so proudly insulted in the last war, and America so barbarously treated in the present, the descendants of those ancient heroes whose high deeds grace the annals of France, had sought transatlantic laurels. Washington had been named Lieutenant General of his Most Christian Majesty's troops in America, and Vice-Admiral of the White flag. The French troops, taking post in Rhode-Island, put the Forts and Batteries in a formidable state of defence. Many were the friendly expressions and acts exchanged between the American and French Commanders. As a symbol of amity and affection, General Washington recommended it to his officers to wear cockades, the ground of which was black, and the relief white. Cordiality and harmony were likely to prevail between the allied troops, whenever brought to co-operate.\*

---

\* "One circumstance alone, says Dr. Ramsay, seemed unfavourable to this spirit of enterprize. This was the deficient clothing of the Americans. Some whole lines, officers as well as men, were shabby; and a great proportion of the privates were without shirts. Such troops brought along side even of allies fully clad in the elegance of uniformity, must have been more or less than men to feel no degradation on the contrast."—This circumstance was, no doubt, calculated to create an unpleasant feeling. —But we are inclined to think that the excellent Ramsay has attached too much importance to this point. The philosophy of soldiers is great. Prowess is their best uniform. Many brave troops have been badly clad—and not the less respectable or less respected for it. Rochambeau, his officers and men, knew that.—They might have sympathized with the distresses of the American troops—but the respect due to their patience and bravery would have been felt—as it was felt throughout. The most illustrious ancestor of Louis, whose troops were now "fully clad in the elegance of uniformity," the good and great Henry the IV. whose memory will live forever, had a very shabby *pour point*, and laughed at it, when he performed those miracles of valour which astonish us. His gallant followers, the forefathers of most of the noblemen with Rochambeau, were in a correspondent trim for months, and also bore it with correspondent gaiety. —There is always a vast difference as to dress, between an army just entering the field, and one that has long been in it.—The distress of Washington's army claimed relief—but it could not excite shame on the contrary, those were, for the troops, *glorious rags*.—The fault was elsewhere.

The arrival of this armament, and the annunciation of a still greater force, diffused a general joy among the Americans. Measures were taken to bring into the field 35,000 men, and to insure specific supplies for their support. Again the electric spark of enthusiasm seemed to circulate through the Union. "Shall America, it was generally asked, do less for herself than her magnanimous ally? Shall we, with folded arms, look on the exertions of other powers, and suffer them, almost unassisted by us, to work our salvation and Independence? No! The idea is humiliating.... The fact would be dishonourable.... And with equal astonishment and indignation, our posterity would read it in future story!" These and other reflections stimulated the activity of the States—roused their dormant energies. Draughts from the militia were added to voluntary enlistments, to complete the required quotas. Hopes were entertained of an overwhelming attempt against New York. An unexpected reinforcement even disappointed these hopes.

When the French squadron arrived at Rhode-Island, the fleet under De Ternay had a decided superiority over that of Arbuthnot. A few days reversed the case. Admiral Graves, who had followed the Chevalier, reached New-York with six ships of the line. A plan against the French armament at Rhode-Island was immediately formed.—Clinton, with the chief part of his troops proceeded to Huntington Bay, on the Sound, while Arbuthnot sailed round Long-Island, in order to co-operate by Sea. Gen. Washington immediately advanced towards New-York, resolved to attack it, in Clinton's absence. The latter quickly retraced his route to that City, leaving Arbuthnot to block up the French fleet by sea. The force announced by Rochambeau was now acting in the West-Indies, under the Count De Guichen. With anxious solicitude, it was hourly looked for by Washington and Rochambeau—the termination of the war, it was thought, would follow its arrival. The Great Ruler of events had otherwise ordered. De Guichen was compelled to convoy to Europe, the trade from the French and Spanish Islands—and the campaign ended without the desired issue.

The intelligence of De Guichen's return to Europe, frustrated the high expectations of prompt success against New-York; and rendered new arrangements necessary.—To concert these, Washington, Rochambeau, De Ternay, La Fayette and Knox, met at Hartford. During this interview, an event took place, fraught with causes of alarm, suspicion and distrust, as well as with great immediate danger. One of the earliest, warmest, and bravest supporters of American liberty—who had been so during a long series of hazards, difficulties, and discouragements of every sort—who was still deemed to be so, and was accord-

Treason of  
General Arnold.

Sept'r. 21.

CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

ingly entrusted with the command of the important post at West-Point, the Key of the Hudson—opening or shutting the communication between the Eastern and the Middle States—Benedict Arnold proved a traitor!—That man seems to have considered superior courage, and dauntless intrepidity, as adequate substitutes for all those manly and fine qualifications which, together with prowess, constitute the character of the accomplished soldier. To delicacy, rectitude of principle, and purity of action, in private life, he was an utter stranger. Prudence and economy, he totally disregarded. He had launched into a sphere of dissipation, luxury, and extravagance, little suited to the sternness of republican virtue; and as his patrimonial resources were humble and scanty, his pay moderate, his gains from commercial and privateering enterprizes, precarious and irregular, he scrupled not, for the gratification of his favorite parade, pomp, and sensuality, to employ fraud, peculation, and extortion. In Canada, and particularly at Montreal, he had given strong indications of his real bent. The country wanted leaders of acknowledged courage and enterprizing genius; his ignoble pilferings were overlooked. His command in Philadelphia was marked with similar features of avarice, greedily plundering for the purposes of profligacy. His conduct, in that command, subjected him to the censure of a Court-Martial, and to a reprimand from the Commander in Chief. At a subsequent epoch, his claims against the public were, by the Commissioners appointed to examine them, and afterwards by a Committee of Congress, found replete with fraud and shameless knavery. It was not easy for a man of this character to return to the sober paths of temperance and economy—his numerous creditors were importunate—Arnold saw ruin hanging over his head—to avert it, he blushed not to sell his country! It is a matter of surprize that the rulers of America—that General Washington, who must have been deeply acquainted with human nature, and known the intimate and necessary connection between private and public virtue, which are, indeed, but different branches of the same trunk—different features of the same character—should have, under the circumstances just described, continued to repose confidence in Arnold—and committed to his faith the Thermopylæ of America. To account for this, we are obliged to look back to the past services of Arnold—to his tried bravery—to his hitherto ardent and boisterous patriotism—and to reflect, that noble hearts are least susceptible of distrust—we can easily conceive that Washington thought treason impossible, until the dishonourable fact stared him in the face.

British vigilance never slept, and British gold was ever ready for the purposes of corruption. The policy of the Macedonian Philip, had been deeply studied, and no oppor-



tunity of practising it was left unimproved. Soon Clinton discovered the embarrassments of Arnold—he saw him on the brink of a precipice—a bridge of gold was, by the magic wand of the foul enchantress, bribery, thrown across it—in prospect, titles, wealth, pleasure, were presented. Arnold yielded—the soldier's fame, the patriot's objects, the awful sentence of posterity, should a traitor's doom fail to overtake him sooner, the contempt of nations, and the hate of his country—all was lost in the blaze of the glittering metal—West-Point was to be attacked—a thin veil of sham defence would cover the base delivery of it into the hands of Clinton—and again America would be enslaved! The Genius of Liberty watched over these midnight plots. They recoiled on the head of the schemers. Among the officers of the British army, was Major Andre, Adjutant-General to Sir H. Clinton. The liberality of nature, and the advantages of education had concurred to make him the accomplished man and soldier. His person was handsome...his manners highly polished—his mind refined...his heart, the sanctuary of some of the noblest virtues that can adorn humanity. Unfortunately, he was chosen by Sir Henry Clinton, whose affection and esteem he possessed in a high degree, to knock at the door of the profligate Arnold, and propose a price for the important fortress under his command. It is not easy to reconcile many of the maxims and practices of war with the dictates of common honesty. Seduction, as well as violence, is sanctioned; and the General who is most successful in demoralizing, as well as beating the army of his enemy, is most applauded. According to the rules of this singular, but received code, Andre might justify to himself the dishonourable task which he undertook; it is thought, however, that he entered upon it against the suggestions of his own mind, and at the solicitation of Sir Henry, to whom he owed a considerable debt of gratitude, although his delicacy led him to exonerate the British Commander from having pressed on his exertions so hazardous an enterprize. However this may be, he knew the awful penalty attached to the situation of an enemy found in disguise in the lines of those with whom he is at war; and, with this knowledge, he acted throughout this lamentable affair.

It is said that a correspondence had long before passed between Mrs. Arnold and Major Andre, who had politely offered to forward to her some elegancies of female attire from New-York. Thus far the correspondence was authorized by civilized warfare, which often presents in the same spot, and almost at the same moment, courtesy and hostility. This innocent correspondence, it is added, brought on a treacherous one between Arnold and Andre, under the fictitious names of Gustavus and Anderson. The

CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

Capture of  
Major An-  
dre.

frantic, agonizing grief of the unfortunate Mrs. Arnold, upon first hearing of her husband's defection, sufficiently evinces that she was unconscious of this. Personal communications becoming necessary, Andre was, in the night, brought by a boat from the Vulture sloop of war, to the beach, where he met the wily Arnold. The returning day dawned upon their secret and prolonged conversation; and Andre was led to a place of concealment within the American lines. His return to the Vulture, was rendered impossible by subsequent circumstances. Quitting, therefore, his uniform, and taking a passport from Arnold, under the name of John Anderson, and as if dispatched down the country, Andre, in disguise, proceeded towards N. York. His pretended official character secured him from interruption, until three militia-men, patrolling along the road, suddenly arrested him, at a moment when he no longer apprehended danger. An unguarded expression betrayed him. He was searched, and several important papers, in Arnold's hand-writing, found secreted in his boots. They consisted of documents relative to the post at West-Point. In vain Andre tempted the integrity of his captors with the offer of his watch, his horse, and any sum of money they should name. Vanwert, Paulding and Williams, rejected with scorn that polluting gold which had seduced the execrable Arnold. Three obscure peasants, leaning only on their virtue and a sense of duty, with no past exploits, no present reputation to stimulate their integrity, were deaf to every offer of pecuniary and honorary rewards.\* They immediately conducted Andre to their commanding officer. A note was, by permission of this officer, sent to Arnold, informing him of Anderson's detention. This step saved the traitor. He hastily took refuge on board the Vulture. Andre, now regardless of the consequences, avowed his name and rank; and seemed anxious only to remove the cloud of infamy which obscured his character. To Gen. Washington he wrote a dignified letter, protesting that his original intention had been to meet Arnold on neutral ground, and that, contrary to that intention he had been betrayed into the vile condition of an enemy in disguise within the American lines—and requesting decency of treatment, to whatever rigor he might be devoted by policy. By Washington's orders, he was, without loss of time, conducted to Head-Quarters, where a Board of General Officers examined him, and reported it as their opi-

---

\* They were remunerated by Congress, who resolved "that each of them should receive annually, two hundred dollars, in specie, during life," and directed the Board of War "to procure for each of them, a silver medal, on one side of which should be a shield, with this inscription, *fidelity*, and on the other, *vincit amor patrie*, and that the Commander in Chief should present the same, with the thanks of Congress, for their fidelity, and the eminent service they had rendered their country."

nion "that Major Andre ought to be considered as a spy, and that agreeably to the laws and usages of nations, he ought to suffer death." In the whole progress of the enquiry, Andre's request of decent treatment was scrupulously complied with. While the members of the Board admired the noble candour, the modest firmness, and becoming sensibility, which the unfortunate Andre displayed, he was himself penetrated with their liberality and delicacy. The time, manner, and object of his interview with Arnold, the subsequent change of dress, and other circumstances, within the American lines, but too well determined the complexion of his case, and the melancholy issue. Efforts were made, however, by Sir Henry Clinton, and Arnold himself, to prove that Andre came out under the protection of a flag, with a passport from a General Officer in actual service, and, consequently, could not be justly detained. But when the sacred and high purposes for which flags have been instituted, come to be considered, this reasoning becomes an aggravation of the offence. Andre himself was so fully sensible of this, that he ridiculed and exploded the idea before the Board of officers that examined him. Arnold might have saved him—stepping forward as a voluntary victim of expiation, he would have rescued the lamented Andre, and redeemed his own name from the imperishable infamy attached to it.—But he was incapable of soaring to such a height of generosity.—His soul was debased; his turpitude irrevocably fixed. General Washington made an unavailing effort to secure his person,\* and restore the amiable Andre, to his friends. The issue is well known. Justice prevailed;† humanity wept.

His condemnation and death.

\* See Lee's Memoirs, Vol. II. Chap. 30, page 159, &c. There are few episodes in the history of the American war, so interesting as that of the brave John Champe. The whole world will regret his failure.

† General Washington has been much censured by some British historians for his inflexible rigour on this occasion—"But," (says one of them, Coote, *Modern Europe continued*, page 143) "The British officers had no right to blame the inexorable General; for, from the manner in which the war was carried on against the obnoxious provincials, there is no doubt, that if an American officer had been detected in similar conduct, he would have been put to death without hesitation. Sir H. Clinton, who earnestly requested that the Major's life might be spared, would have rejected with scorn the solicitations of a rebel Commander, or of a Congress of republican traitors."—And he adds in a note—as the business was of a traitorous nature on the part of Arnold, and not altogether honourable on that of the Major, whose change of dress, and assumption of a different name, argued his sense of the impropriety or irregularity of his proceedings; the assertion "that Andre went out under every fair and justifiable sanction," is not strictly warranted..... Andre, though a man of honour in his general conduct, appears to have gone beyond the extent of allowable stratagems."

The Annual Register for 1781, says of Andre—"Though the papers that were found in his boot, subjected him to instant execution in the usual summary way practised with spies, yet he nobly chose to encounter that immediate danger and ignominious fate, rather than let any thing come out which could involve Arnold, until he had time to provide for his safety."



CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

Oct'r. 2.

Andre, died on a gibbet.... He died, regretted by the British, and pitied by the Americans. They saw, and admired his manly fortitude : they deplored that stern necessity which required exemplary punishment, when the guilt was demonstrated, and when intentional traitors and their encouragers, must be restrained by their fears. Andre's judges, and the Commander in Chief reluctantly stifled the claims of mercy. The same imperious policy which had dictated an inflexible adherence to the laws and usages of nations, prevented a compliance with the request of Andre, that his death should be the death of a soldier. America, still alarmed and indignant, pointed to the precipice opened beneath her steps.—Suspicion and distrust had been widely excited ; the public mind was in a ferment. Even if we admit the plea of Sir Henry Clinton, and Arnold, the unfortunate Andre had consented to prostitute the sanctity of a flag, and, under its protection, sought to promote a scheme, the execution of which must have brought on thousands incalculable miseries. Posterity will confirm the fatal sentence.—Andre will continue to be pitied, and condemned ; for, the sympathies of the heart, powerful as they are, cannot reverse the dictates of the judgment :

Arnold, like a fallen spirit, now endeavoured to involve others in his guilt and degradation. He had become a Brigadier General in the British army, and he was authorized to raise a corps of cavalry and infantry, who were to be on the same footing with other troops in the British service. In his addresses to the people and armies of America, a miserable sophistry was used to vindicate his own conduct, and induce others to imitate it. The grossest appeal was made to prejudices once prevalent, and to passions always powerful. Gold, Arnold's great lever, was liberally offered. Yet, be it recorded to the immortal honour of the American troops, distressed, suffering as they were under complicated wants, the seducing offers of the insidious tempter produced no effect. The treason of Arnold was no less solitary than it was execrable.

Other e-  
vents.

The adjustment of a cartel for a general exchange of prisoners, except the privates of the convention troops ; and a gallant enterprize of Major Talmadge against fort George, on Long Island, must be added to the transactions in the North, during the year 1780.

Nov'r. 28.

Holland be-  
comes a  
party in the  
war.

This year also, an event highly important to America, took place in Europe. The seven United Provinces of the Netherlands became a party in the war against England. Of the causes by which that important event was produced, it is proper to take in this place, a rapid view.

When the contest between Great Britain and her Colonies began, a treaty of defensive alliance connected the former with the Dutch Republic. The 5th article of that treaty, besides a stipulation for certain succours in the e-

vent of a war, obligated "which ever of the two allies should not be attacked, to break with the aggressor in two months after, if the party attacked should require it." Upon the commencement of hostilities with France, England required from the States' General, neither such succours nor such rupture. Her commercial jealousy, and her maritime encroachments, however, soon disturbed the friendship and harmony which had long united the two nations. Extensively engaged in mercantile speculations, and anxious to partake in those immense advantages which the change in America promised to commercial activity and enterprize, the citizens of the United Provinces, especially those of Holland and West-Friesland, impatiently bore the inconveniences and vexations to which they were frequently subjected by a flagrant abuse of naval preponderance, on the part of Great Britain. Of the many insults offered to their flag, none excited their resentment so much as the following :

A number of Dutch vessels, laden with such stores as were by the treaties existing between the two nations, excluded from the list of contraband articles, yet fearing the lawless violence of British cruizers, sailed for France in company with Rear-Admiral Count De Byland, who himself was bound to the Mediterranean, escorting into that sea, under the protection of a small squadron, a large convoy of merchantmen. Of this, timely intelligence reached England. Immediately Captain Fielding was detached with an adequate force, to stop and search the vessels composing the convoy, and seize such of them as might be found to contain naval stores for the enemy. The two fleets met ; and permission was requested by Fielding to visit the merchant ships. This was refused ; upon which force was resorted to, and resistance followed. The pause occasioned by this contest, which terminated in the defeat of the Dutch Admiral, together with the uncommon obscurity of the subsequent night, afforded to most of the suspected ships sufficient time to baffle the pursuit of the conqueror, and reach in safety their destined ports. Such as remained behind were seized by the British Captain : the Dutch Admiral was then informed that he was at liberty to hoist his flag again, and to prosecute his voyage. He did the first, but insisted upon still accompanying the portion of his convoy taken by Fielding. On the 4th of January, the whole entered Spithead, where the merchant-ships and their cargoes were condemned. Proceedings so violent could not fail to excite through the United Provinces a considerable degree of irritation. In vain did Great Britain offer to pay for the property thus seized and detained, alledging, in excuse of her measures, the temporary necessity of her situation, which compelled her to appropriate to her own use by a *forcible purchase* the stores destined

CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

for an enemy. In vain she proposed such modifications of the subsisting treaties as would obviate in future any disagreeable discussion. These offers for indemnity and for new stipulations were indignantly rejected. The murmur of resentment was heard on all sides ; and signal vengeance was denounced for the insults wantonly offered to the national flag by armed English vessels, and for their open violations of the Dutch Territory, in Europe and in America. An approaching rupture might now be anticipated, and, perhaps, England wished for it. By her, war might be deemed preferable to an inefficient alliance which enabled Holland to supply her enemies with naval and other stores ; and it was natural for a people abounding in maritime means of annoyance to view with an impatient and covetous eye, those immense treasures of the Dutch, which either floated on various parts of the ocean in the full security of peace, or were accumulated in distant and defenceless islands ; nor could the unprepared state of Holland for immediate war, escape the penetration of the British Ministers. But this wish, if it existed at all, was artfully disguised ; and Great Britain apparently made every possible effort to avert the impending breach, and to prevent her discontented ally from acceding to the Northern confederation, so famous under the name of the *armed neutrality*.

Armed neutrality.

This celebrated compact had originated in the same cause to which the dissatisfaction now pervading Holland, has been referred, the naval despotism of Great Britain, for her proud claim of new maritime rights extended to all neutral nations. She insisted on searching the ships of neutrals bound to hostile ports, when suspected of being laden with naval stores, or with the property of enemies. This claim, whether founded on pre-existing treaties or not, was generally reduced to practice. Those powers, whose navigation and commerce the exercise of an assumed right, so broad in its nature, and in its application, liable to so many abuses, could not fail to disturb and harass, early took the alarm ; and the Empress of Russia, Catherine II. if she did not first suggest, at least, first systematized, and afterwards efficiently supported, measures well calculated to check the maritime encroachments of England. On the 26th of February 1780, she addressed to the Courts of London, of Versailles, and of Madrid, a declaration in which she exposed to the eyes of all Europe, the principles which she had adopted for her conduct, and which to her appeared most proper to avoid any future disagreement. Those principles were contained in the following points :

1. That neutral ships should enjoy a free navigation, even from port to port, and on the coasts of the belligerent powers.



II. That all effects belonging to the subjects of the said belligerent powers, should be looked upon as free, on board such neutral ships, except only such goods as were stipulated contraband.

III. That in order to determine what characterizes a port blocked up, that denomination should not be granted, but to such places before which there should actually be a number of enemy's ships stationed near enough to make its entry dangerous.

1780

France and Spain readily entered into views so propitious to their interests, and so conformable, in the abstract, to the dictates of universal reason, and to those principles of eternal justice, which constitute the basis of the law of nations. By them, the wisdom and energy of Catherine were extolled to the sky. In their answer to her declaration, they not only expressed their entire approbation of her views and measures, but assured her that an inherent sense of justice had already induced them to direct their Admirals and other naval commanders, to pursue, in respect to neutrals, the proper and liberal course pointed out by Her Imperial Majesty. The pressure of existing difficulties forced the Court of London to disguise its alarm and resentment at a plan so hostile to its present views, and to its future preponderance. Its answer was purposely cautious and reserved, and artfully indefinite. It stated that "from the commencement of hostilities, the King had given precise orders respecting the flag of Her Imperial Majesty, and the commerce of her subjects, agreeably to the law of nations, and the tenor of his treaty of commerce with her, a treaty to which he would adhere with the most scrupulous exactness." It further remarked that "in case of fortuitous and unauthorized infringement on the part of British officers, every hardship should be redressed in so equitable a manner, that Her Imperial Majesty should be perfectly satisfied, and acknowledge a spirit of justice similar to that which she herself possessed."

Catherine did not confine herself to this declaration. It being with her a favourite object to consolidate and support the plan which had thus wisely formed and magnanimously proclaimed, she invited the Courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Lisbon, together with the States' General, to concur in a system of *armed neutrality*, the object of which was to defend and maintain those privileges and immunities, which the rights of nations and solemn treaties allowed to neutral flags. Denmark and Sweden cheerfully acceded to the proposed arrangement; but Portugal, influenced by England, and in a great measure dependent on that power, declined taking an active part. The States' General, from their present temper, and with so many causes of irritation for the past, and of apprehension for the future, could not receive such a proposal without sen-

CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

timents of gratitude and exultation. Yet, owing to the slowness which usually marked the proceedings of their Body, they did not immediately give their formal assent to the glorious compact. In their deliberations of April, 1780, three important objects occupied their attention, and one of these was the invitation of the Empress of Russia. They unanimously declared that "they accepted it with gratitude, and would enter into a negotiation upon that subject with the Envoy of Her Imperial Majesty, in order to carry as soon as possible, those propositions into effect." The two other objects to which we have alluded, were the succours, at last, demanded by Great Britain, upon the declaration of war by Spain, and the expediency of granting convoys to merchant ships bearing the flag of the republic. With the demand for succours, the States' General refused to comply, alledging the anterior disregard of Great Britain herself for the treaty of alliance, and the nature of the present war, which did not appear to them to fall within the *casus fœderis*'s, an unjust and causeless aggression alone having been contemplated by the framers of that treaty. The grant of convoys for the protection of national trading vessels, was, at the same time adopted, as a measure both legitimate and expedient.

A circumstance very soon occurred, which gave to the situation of the United Provinces, a decided character, and did not permit them to partake in the advantages of the armed neutrality. It seemed to be Heaven's awful decree that most nations should feel the effects of the American contest, and that, as its difficulties and terrors increased, England should face a storm which herself had raised, without a single friend or ally to assist her in the formidable struggle. Beside the commercial views which, as before observed, excited in the United Provinces a spirit friendly to the cause and Independence of America, noble motives impelled the citizens of the Dutch Republic to a favourable disposition. The principal among these, were the detestation of all dissenting protestants for the intolerance and the real or supposed encroachments of the church of England, and the sympathy which a comparison of the glorious struggle now maintained by the American patriots, with the heroic efforts of the Dutch themselves in their former successful opposition to Spanish tyranny, was calculated to create in every virtuous bosom. The Province of Holland, and, in that Province, the city of Amsterdam, were foremost in cherishing such sentiments. Hence the occurrence alluded to, and now to be circumstantially related.

In September, 1778, as Mr. William Lee, appointed by Congress Commissioner to the Courts of Vienna and Berlin, was on his way to the Prussian Capital, he met at Aix La Chapelle with Mr. John D. Neufvêlle, one of the prin-

1780

cial merchants of Amsterdam, warmly attached to the commercial and other interests of his country, which he considered as more intimately connected with those of France, and with the success of the American cause, than with the triumph and prosperity of England. This fortuitous interview was soon improved into a scheme of incalculable prospective benefit to the citizens of the Dutch Republic, and to those of the confederated States. This was no less than the plan of a treaty of Amity and Commerce between the two nations. The plan was, indeed, eventual, Mr. Lee not being invested with powers to negotiate or sign such a treaty, and Mr. De Neufville himself merely acting under the instructions of his friend Mr. Van Berkel, Counsellor and pensionary of the city of Amsterdam, with the sanction of the Burgomasters of that city; but, in so momentous a concern, it was thought expedient to venture upon a scheme replete with mutual advantage. The outlines of the projected treaty were, therefore, agreed upon, and signed by Mr. Lee and Mr. De Neufville, the latter having further engaged, in the name of the Regency of Amsterdam, that "so long as America should not enter upon any proceeding, hostile to the interests of the States of Holland, the city of Amsterdam would never adopt any measure that might tend to oppose the interests of America, but would, on the contrary, use all its influence upon the States of the seven United Provinces, to effect the desired connection." Several copies of the plan were early transmitted to America, but the whole transaction remained concealed from the British Ministers, until the capture of Mr. Laurens, in the beginning of September, 1780.

That gentleman had been elected on the 21st of October, 1779, for the purpose of negotiating a loan in Holland; on the 1st of the ensuing month, he was clothed with full powers to arrange and conclude a treaty of Amity and Commerce with the United Provinces of the low countries. Congress had duly appreciated the advantages of the project submitted by Mr. Lee and Mr. De Neufville; and their hopes of realizing that project were the more sanguine, as the latest intelligence from Europe stated the resentment of the Dutch at the haughty and violent conduct of the British, to have nearly reached its acme. Mr. Laurens sailed, entrusted with two negotiations of high import, and cheered by bright anticipations. Scarcely however, had the vessel which conveyed him, deserted the coast of Newfoundland, when she was attacked and taken by the British frigate, the *Vestal*. The boldness, celerity, and skill of an English sailor rescued from the waves the papers of the American envoy, which had been thrown overboard, but did not suddenly sink. On his arrival in

Mr. Laurens  
is taken by  
the British,

and confined in the  
tower of  
London.  
Oct'r. 6.



CHAP.  
XVII.

1780

Nov'r. 10.

England, Mr. Laurens was committed to the tower, under a charge of high treason; and, through the medium of his papers, the administration was made acquainted with the existing plan of an eventual treaty of Amity and Commerce between Holland and America. All the papers connected with that plan were delivered, in the beginning of November, to the Prince of Orange, who laid them, on the 5th of the same month, before the States of Holland and West Friesland. A few days after, Sir Joseph Yorke, the British Ambassador, presented to the States' General, on the subject of those papers, a memorial, abounding in expressions unsuitable between sovereigns, peremptorily demanding, in the name of the King, his master, "a formal disavowal of the irregular conduct of the States of Amsterdam, in entering so early as the month of August, 1778, into a clandestine correspondence with the American rebels, and giving powers and instructions for the purpose of forming a treaty of indissoluble friendship with the said rebels." The memorial further insisted "on speedy satisfaction, adequate to the offence, and the exemplary punishment of the pensioner Van Berkel and his accomplices, as disturbers of the public peace and violators of the rights of nations." This memorial was submitted to the States' General on the 10th of November. By their resolution of the 27th of the same month, they openly and solemnly disapproved what had thus secretly and irregularly been done. Beyond this, their powers did not extend: they possessed no jurisdiction over the respective Provinces, and, as to the States of Holland belonged a sovereign and exclusive authority over their own subjects, they alone could inflict the punishment required. Upon application to them for that purpose, they unanimously came to a resolution "to consult a Court of Justice in regard to the requisition for punishment, requesting the said Court to give their opinion as soon as possible, foregoing all other affairs." The British Ambassador was made acquainted with this resolution, but he declared it nugatory and illusive, and refused to transmit it to his Court. Impatient to commence a predatory war against the commerce of the Dutch and their foreign possessions, the British Cabinet recalled Sir Joseph Yorke from the Hague, and, on the 20th December, issued a manifesto, charging the States' General with many infringements and violations of existing stipulations, and followed by an order of Council "that general reprisals should be granted against their ships, their goods, and their subjects." A few days before the publication of the English manifesto, the States' General had acceded to the measures of the armed neutrality, and in their re-criminating answer to the charges of the Court of St. James, they ascribed the hostile and vindictive spirit of that Court, especially to an accession so long feared

and resisted by Great Britain. Thus did England, impelled, at the same time, by national pride, illiberal jealousy, and insatiate rapaciousness, a people long united with her by strong ties, and whose hostilities, owing to the vicinity of the two countries, and to the naval skill and resources of the Dutch, could not fail to throw a considerable weight into the scale of the war. The importance of this momentous incident in the grand political drama now acting in both hemispheres, was duly felt by the Americans, although the direct advantages expected from it, were yet distant and precarious. The contemplated relations of Amity and Commerce, and the desired loan, took place at a later date.\*

---

\* Mr. John Adams was then in Holland—but he was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the 7 Provinces, and commissioned to negotiate a loan only on the 1st January, 1781. That gentleman had been sent to Europe in Nov'r. 1779, for negotiating peace &c. with Great Britain, whenever that power should be disposed to terminate the war. He embarked at Boston in the French frigate *La Sensible* bound to Brest—but she sprung a leak, and obliged to make the port of Ferrol in Spain—Mr. Adams went by land to Paris—from Corunna, Dec'r. 16, 1779, he wrote to Congress that Great Britain was not yet in an humour for peace.—The new Russian Ambassador to London having, on his way there, made some stop at Paris, a rumour spread through Europe, that Russia was about to employ her mediation for peace—Mr. Adams had no doubt of the acknowledgment of the Independence of the United States being made a preliminary.—In July, 1780, Mr. Adams went from Paris to Holland—we will see him in due time, arranging the desired loan—and the contemplated treaty.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

---

*New expedition against Virginia, under Arnold—Arnold lands at Westover—Enters Richmond--Detaches Simcoe to Westham--Injuries of the enemy at Richmond--Skirmishes with the enemy—Plan against Arnold—Situation of Virginia—Arrival of a French squadron in the Bay—The whole French fleet sails for the Chesapeake—Engagement between D'Estouches and Arbuthnot—General Phillips joins Arnold—La Fayette arrives at Richmond—Phillips takes the command of the British troops in Virginia—State of the country—Depredations of Phillips and Arnold—Affair at Petersburg—Movements of Phillips for a junction with Cornwallis—La Fayette encamps at Wilton—Phillips at Petersburg—Cornwallis arrives—Virginia resolves to cede her Territory N. W. of the Ohio, to the United States—The confederation is completed—The plan against Detroit is abandoned—Successful expedition against the Cherokees—Successful stratagem of Lieutenant Col. Washington—Morgan is detached towards Ninety Six—Battle of the Cowpens—Cornwallis pursues Morgan—Attempt on Georgetown—General Greene retreats over the Kadkin—Designs of Cornwallis—Greene crosses the Dan—Cornwallis marches to Hillsborough, where he erects the Royal standard—General Greene recrosses the Dan—State of his army—He is reinforced—Lee strikes Pyle's Royal militia—Battle of Guilford Court-House—Greene retreats to the Reedy Fork--And thence to the Iron Works--Cornwallis retires to Cross-Creek--And thence to Wilmington—Greene follows him as far as Ramsay's mills--Then marches into South-Carolina—Cornwallis advances into Virginia.*

### CHAP. XVIII.

---

1780

New expedition against Virginia, under Arnold.

Sir Henry Clinton, bent on a vigorous prosecution of the war in the Southern States, again turned his eyes to Virginia. The policy of diminishing the resources, and enfeebling the defensive means of a part of the Union, from which so much assistance was derived by the country at large, and on which the principal weight of the war would soon be thrown, was obvious. He pursued it. A new armament was prepared in New-York against Virginia, and the direction of it committed to the paricide Arnold, who, better than any other officer in the British service, knew the vulnerable condition of the country, and those sources of revenue and military vigor, which it was desirable for the enemy to drain.



Early in December, General Washington, ever attentive to the movements of the British, informed the Governor of Virginia of an expedition destined for the Southward, *as was given out in New-York*. Intimations of a similar nature from the Commander in Chief, or Congress, had, for some time past, been almost constantly hanging over the heads of the Governor and Council. It had, therefore, become necessary for them to determine whether such intimations should be considered as sufficient ground, at all times, for calling the militia into the field, or that measures should be adopted only in the event of actual invasion! The financial embarrassments of the country, the ideas, habits, and disposition of the people, decided in favour of the latter. A standing army of militia was deemed inexpedient, if not impracticable. Economy was now more necessary than ever; and inattention to it, in the beginning, had gone far towards that ruin of the public finances, which strenuous and well directed efforts might yet retrieve.—At the same time, the Executive, thus warned by the Commander in Chief, of a blow which might be aimed at them, awaited with watchful anxiety, the full developement of the enemy's views, resolved to act according as circumstances should require.\*

The uncertainty attending the embarkation at New-York, was soon dispelled. On the 30th of December, 27 sail of vessels were seen entering the capes of Virginia. Of this circumstance, the Governor was informed on the 31st; but it was not yet known whether the fleet thus described, was friendly or hostile; what its real force, and other circumstances were; and to what point on the waters of the Chesapeake its course was bent. It being more than probable, however, that this was the armament announced by the Commander in Chief, as destined against some part of the southern section of the confederated States, General Nelson was immediately dispatched to the lower country—the militia, the public arms and stores, were placed at his disposal—in short, full powers were given him to adopt and execute such measures as exigencies might demand. In the preceding summer, the patriotic and zealous Nelson had been requested by the Executive, to call together the county Lieutenants of the lower parts of the State, and to concert with them the general measures to be taken for instant opposition on any invasion, until further resistance could be organized by the government. He had done so; and the most unbounded confidence was placed in his exertions.—More definite intelligence soon apprized the Governor of the hostile nature of the fleet—and of its advance up James river to Warrasquak-Bay. All arrangements

Dec'r. 31.

1781

January 2.

\* Vide Appendix.

CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

January 3.

January 4.

were immediately taken for calling in a sufficient body of militia for opposition. The hostile fleet was next observed at anchor opposite James Town, and its object supposed to be Williamsburg. Availing themselves, however, of a favourable change in the wind, and of a full tide, the invaders, proceeded to Kennons, and thence to Westover. On their way, they had taken possession of some works which the Virginians had at Hood's, by which two or three of the British vessels had been slightly injured, but which were of necessity abandoned by the small garrison of fifty men, placed there on the enemy's landing, to invest the works. That either Petersburg or Richmond, was the intended object of attack, had now become sufficiently evident, but the orders for drawing militia having been given only two days, no opposition was in readiness. Every effort was, therefore, necessary to withdraw the arms, records, and whatever objects of value could be removed. Every effort was accordingly made to convey these to the foundery and laboratory, about six miles above Richmond, with a further view of transporting them, if necessary, beyond the river at Westham, the nearest crossing place, the moment it should be ascertained on which side the enemy had landed. Baron Stuben had accompanied General Greene to the South, as far as Richmond, where he had remained in order to assemble, organize, and march to the Southern army, the new levies in the State. On the South side of James river, the Baron now actively exerted himself in taking such measures of security as the circumstance required. He thought Petersburg the immediate object of the British army. The contrary soon became manifest. Landing at Westover on the 4th, Arnold drew up his men in order of march, and pointed his route to Richmond. The Governor, on receiving intelligence of this, ordered the arms and stores, which until then had been carrying towards Westham, to be conveyed directly across the river at Richmond; and sent orders for a similar operation with respect to those which had already been transported to or near Westham. To that place he himself repaired in the evening, and having urged by his presence, the active removal across the river of whatever could be secured, he went late in the night to Tuckahoe. The transportation was busily continued through the whole night of the 4th, and the next day until the near approach of the enemy. Returning on the morning of the 5th to Britton's, opposite Westham, and finding that the arms which had been heaped on the bank, were open to the effect of artillery from the other shore, the Governor had them removed to a safer spot, and proceeded to Manchester, whence the enemy, and their busy movements in Richmond, were now in full view. They had left Westover at two o'clock the preceding day, had encamped at Four-mile Creek, and arrived, at

Arnold  
lands at  
Westover.

January 4.

Enters  
Richmond.

January 5

CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

one o'clock on the 5th, at Richmond. The militia, dispersed over a vast tract of country, could be assembled but slowly. On the day the enemy advanced against Richmond, 200 only were embodied. These had been drawn from the Town, and its neighbourhood, and were evidently too few to do any thing effectual.

The Governor desirous of advising with Baron Steuben, went to Chetwood's, his Head-Quarters, and there learning that the Baron was at Colonel Fleming's, four or five miles above Britton's, he proceeded to that place. In the course of the evening, he was called on by certain citizens of Richmond, with an offer, on the part of Arnold, not to burn the town, on condition that British vessels should be permitted to come to it unmolested, and to take away the tobacco deposited there. This proposition was rejected without hesitation; and it was soon known that, at the very time Arnold was offering it, he had detached a regiment of infantry, and fifty horse, under the command of Colonel Simcoe, to the Foundery, where they were then burning that building, the Boring mill, the Magazine and two other houses. The same party advanced to Westham, but finding there no objects either for plunder or destruction, they retired to Richmond. The next day, Arnold burnt some buildings of public, and some of private property, destroyed a great quantity of private stores, and, about noon, began his retreat. He encamped that evening (the 6th) at Four-mile Creek, and on the 7th, at Barclay and Westover. The Governor on the same day, after taking measures for having the public archives withdrawn from their exposure to the weather at Britton's, passed the night at Manchester, and, in the morning of the 8th, returned to Richmond. The enemy continued that day at Barclay and Westover; and, in the evening, detached Simcoe's horse to Charles City Court-house, where they surprised a party of 150 militia, of whom they killed one, wounded three, and took 7 or 8 prisoners. On the 9th they embarked their cavalry, on the 10th their infantry, and began to descend the river, having then within less than 48 hours from the time of their landing at Westover, penetrated 33 miles into the country, done the whole injury, and retired. At Richmond, the public property destroyed or taken, consisted of 300 muskets, some clothing for the troops, a small quantity of sulphur, some Quarter-Master's stores, (of which 120 sides of leather constituted the chief part) some artificers tools, and 3 waggons. Besides these articles, 5 brass four pounders, which had been sunk in the river, were discovered to the enemy, raised, and carried off. At the Foundery, 5 tons of gun-powder were thrown into the canal, a great proportion of which was saved by re-manufacturing. Part of the papers belonging to the Auditor's office, and the books and papers of the Council office, were also destroy-

Injuries  
done by the  
enemy.

January 6,



CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

ed. They had been ordered to Westham ; but in the hurry and confusion of the moment, they were carried by mistake to the foundery. The enemy's force consisted of about 1500 infantry, and their cavalry was said to amount to 120.

Many persons still live, who recollect the size of Richmond at that time. In the course of the following year, the *fiat* of the Legislature bestowed upon it the magnificent name of city ; but it was yet a city in embryo. It scarcely afforded sufficient accommodations for the officers of Government, of which it had but recently been made the seat. The public buildings were temporary and modest. In short, every thing there, except the grand and sublime features of natural beauty impressed by the creator himself on the picturesque scite, was in a state of infancy. Art had given to the place no means of defence whatever. It could be protected only by a force collected from distant and various points. The fancy, in picturing to itself the Metropolis of Virginia, even at that epoch, is apt to exaggerate realities. Definite and accurate views can alone reduce things to their true size, substance and form. On this account, our narrative is made to embrace details tending to rectify distorted or magnified estimates.

Virginia was not able by maritime means to arrest an invader at the Capes. Had even the greater part of her population been efficiently armed, it is doubtful whether all her assailable points could have been secured from insult and injury, against an enemy in full possession of the command of the water. With an empty treasury, with scarcely any arms, with a formidable combination to oppose in the West, an advancing foe to meet in the South, and continual demands on her resources to answer in the North, it is no matter of surprise that she should not be fully prepared to repel this new invader from the East.— But let us return to the immediate subject of our narrative.

Skirmishes  
with the e-  
nemy.

While the main force of the enemy was acting against Richmond, some of their vessels had penetrated up the Appomattox to Broadway, where General Smallwood, with a party of two or three hundred militia, with muskets only, obliged them to retire from a prize they had taken ; and, the next day, having procured one or two four pounders, he renewed the attack, and forced them to fall down from City-Point to their main fleet at Westover.

In the mean time, the militia were collecting on both sides of James river. Baron Steuben was extremely active in organizing them, and in directing their smallest movements. Vigilance, supplying in a great measure the want of force, had prevented the enemy from crossing the river, an operation which might have been very fatal. The Governor, on seeing the militia assemble on all sides, still en-

tertained hopes, that the plunderers would not escape with total impunity. But the elements seemed to attend the will of the enemy. The wind, which from their leaving Jamestown had set directly up the river, shifted to the opposite point at the moment of their embarkation. When they reached Hood's, Baron Steuben was within 9 or 10 miles of that place. The whole British army was landed there in the night, Arnold himself attending in person. The brave Colonel Clarke, of Kaskaskias,\* who happened to be at Richmond, preparing for a grand enterprize against Detroit, when Arnold advanced from Westover, cheerfully joined the Baron in his annoyance of the retiring foe. So soon as the British landed at Hood's, he was detached by Steuben, with two hundred and forty men—drew a party of the enemy into an ambuscade—and there gave them a deliberate fire, which killed seventeen on the spot, and wounded thirteen. The fire of the Americans was feebly returned—after which the British pressed onward with fixed bayonets—Clark's party were badly armed, and he prudently directed a retreat.—Arnold slowly fell down to Cobham, whence he carried away sixty hogsheads of tobacco. At Smithfield, and at Mackay's mills, he destroyed some stores. On the 20th, he reached Portsmouth, intending to establish there a permanent post. He had been lately reinforced by three transports, seperated from him in a storm, as he proceeded from New-York to the Capes of Virginia. The troops under his command now amounted to about two thousand. The naval force under Commodore Symmonds, consisted of the Charon, of forty four guns, the Amphitrite, Thames, Iris and Charleston frigates; the Fowey, of twenty guns, two Sloops of war, a Privateer ship, and two Brigs.—At this time, about four thousand militia were embodied—but they were divided into three distant encampments—one, under General Weedon, at Fredericksburg, for the protection of the important works there—another, under General Nelson, at and near Williamsburg—and a third, under Baron Steuben, at Cabin Point.

The capture of the traitor Arnold had, from the moment of his defection, been an object of eager pursuit with all the patriots. The Governor of Virginia was induced to deem the plan practicable. The following letter, addressed to General Muhlenburg developes his views on this subject:

Plan against  
Arnold.

\* Erroneously stated to be a Col. Clarke of the Virginia line, taken at Charleston, and lately exchanged.—(Lee's Memoirs, Vol. II. page 11.)

The Clarke alluded to by Gen. Lee, was Jonathan Clarke, a brother of G. R. Clarke. Another brother of his, Wm. Clarke, is now Governor of Upper Louisiana.



CHAP.  
XVIII.

RICHMOND, January 31, 1781.

1781

“ Sir,

“ Acquainted as you are with the treasons of Arnold, I need say nothing for your information, or to give you a proper sentiment of them. You will readily suppose that it is above all things desirable to drag him from those, under whose wing he is now sheltered. On his march to and from this place, I am certain it might have been done with facility, by men of enterprize and firmness. I think it may still be done, though, perhaps, not quite so easily. Having peculiar confidence in the men from the Western side of the Mountains, I meant, as soon as they should come down, to get the enterprize proposed to a chosen number of them, such, whose courage and whose fidelity would be above all doubt. Your perfect knowledge of those men personally, and my confidence in your discretion, induce me to ask you to pick from among them, proper characters, in such numbers as you think best; to reveal to them our desire; and engage them to undertake to seize and bring off this greatest of all traitors.— Whether this may be best effected by their going in as friends, and awaiting their opportunity, or otherwise, is left to themselves. The smaller the number, the better, so that they may be sufficient to manage him. Every necessary caution must be used on their part, to prevent a discovery of their design by the enemy. I will undertake, if they are successful in bringing him off alive, that they shall receive five thousand guineas reward among them; and to men formed for such an enterprize, it must be a great incitement to know that their names will be recorded with glory in history, with those of Vawert, Paulding and Williams. The inclosed order from Baron Steuben will authorize you to call for, and to dispose of any force you may think necessary to place in readiness for covering the enterprize, and securing the retreat of the party. Mr. Newton, the bearer of this, and to whom its contents are communicated in confidence, will provide men of trust, to go as guides. These may be associated in the enterprize, or not, as you please; but let the point be previously settled, that no difficulty may arise as to the parties entitled to participate of the reward. You know how necessary profound secrecy is in this business, even if it be not undertaken.”

Resentment for injuries inflicted on themselves, combining in the breast of Virginians, with the detestation and abhorrence generally inspired by Arnold's treachery, there were men in Muhlenburg's corps willing to undertake even without any other reward than the gratitude of their country, the proposed task; but Arnold had become more cautious, and circumspect; he now lay close in his quarters at Portsmouth; and never afterwards unguardedly exposed



his person. He, therefore, escaped the punishment which public vengeance intended for him; but he did not escape the infamy due to traitors; and lost as he seems to have been to almost all sense of honor and shame, still it is to be presumed that he could not so effectually silence the voice of remorse, as not secretly to undergo, at times, the torments of a mental hell.\*

The real situation of Virginia is strongly depicted in the letters of the Governor. "The fatal want of arms," he wrote to the President of Congress, on the 8th of February, "puts it out of our power to bring a greater force into the field than will barely suffice to restrain the adventures of the pitiful body of men the enemy have at Portsmouth.—Should they be reinforced, the country will be perfectly open to them by land as well as by water." "I have been knocking at the door of Congress," he wrote to a friend on the 17th of the same month, "for aids of all kinds, but especially of arms, ever since the middle of summer. The Speaker, Harrison, is gone to be heard on that subject. Justice, indeed, requires that we should be aided powerfully. Yet, if they would only repay us the arms we have lent them, we should give the enemy trouble, though abandoned to ourselves." On the same day, he addressed the Commander in Chief, nearly in the same words, "Arms and a naval force," he observed, "are the only means of salvation for Virginia. Two days ago, I received information of the arrival of a sixty-four gun ship and two frigates, in our Bay, being part of the fleet of our good Ally, at Rhode-Island. Could they get at the British ships, they are sufficient to destroy them, but these are drawn up into Elizabeth river, into which the sixty-four cannot enter. I apprehend they could do nothing more than block up the river. This, indeed, would reduce the enemy, as we could cut off their supplies by land: but the operation requiring much time, would probably be too dangerous for the auxiliary force. Not having yet had any particular information of the designs of the French Commander, I cannot pretend to say what measures this aid will lead to." On the 8th of March, Governor Jefferson again wrote to the Commander in Chief: "I was honored with your Excellency's letter within seven days after its date. We have accordingly been making every preparation on our part which we are able to make. The militia proposed to operate, will be upwards of four thousand from this State, and one thousand or twelve hundred from Carolina, said to be under General Gregory. The enemy are at this time, in a great measure, blockaded by land, there being a force on the East side of Elizabeth river. They suffer for provisions, as they are afraid to

Situation of  
Virginia.

February 7.

March 8.

\* *Virtutem videant intabescantque relicta!*—Gen. Washington thought Arnold so hackneyed in crime as to be incapable of remorse.

CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

Arrival of a  
French  
squadron.

venture far, lest the French squadron should be in the neighbourhood, and come upon them. Were it possible to block up the river, a little time would suffice to reduce them by want and desertions; and would be more sure in its event than an attempt by storm." The French squadron, however, had now returned to Newport, and the co-operation here alluded to by the Governor, related to another auxiliary force, from which the ruin of Arnold, and the destruction of his party, were confidently expected. It is necessary to present to the reader a full view of the circumstances which thus promised relief to Virginia, and threatened the traitor with imminent danger.

Neither General Washington, nor the Congress could look with a tranquil eye on the distresses and perils of Virginia. The impossibility of cutting off Arnold's retreat without a naval force, was obvious; and so long as the British should retain the command of the Sea along the American coast, the French fleet must remain inactive in the harbor of Newport. The elements unexpectedly gave the latter a momentary superiority. Towards the close of January, a detachment from the British fleet sustained, on the East end of Long-Island, a dreadful calamity, in a furious tempest. The Culloden, a new ship of seventy-four guns, was totally lost; the Bedford, of the same force, was dismantled, and otherwise much injured; and the America was driven so far to sea, that Arbuthnot long thought she had foundered. This occurrence afforded an opportunity of wreaking on Arnold signal vengeance, and of relieving, at the same time, a State that had so many claims to protection. The Commander in Chief urged the assistance of the whole French fleet, with a detachment of a thousand troops from Rochambeau's army, for this important object. At the same time, he ordered a detachment of twelve hundred men, under the command of General La Fayette, drawn from the lines of New-England and New-Jersey, immediately to march to the head of the Chesapeake. There these men were to embark for the intended theatre of action, under convoy of a French Frigate, which the Commander in Chief was sure of obtaining, for that purpose, from the French Admiral. The plan of General Washington was commensurate with the object in view—it could scarcely fail of success. Unfortunately, it had been anticipated on a smaller scale. The Chevalier De La Luzerne, at the request of the Congressional Delegates from Virginia, had pressed on the Chevalier Destouches, who, upon the death of Admiral De Ternay, at Newport, had assumed the command of the French fleet, the expediency of detaching a squadron to the Chesapeak, should circumstances favor such an enterprize. The Delegates had represented a small force as adequate to the contemplated relief—and such a force would, indeed, have been sufficient, had not Arnold



secured a station inaccessible to ships of a certain description. In consequence of this previous idea, when General Washington's more formidable scheme was communicated, the sixty four, and the two frigates alluded to by the Governor, in his letter of February 17, had already sailed for the Chesapeak; and the activity of the British Admiral in repairing his damaged ships, rendered it dangerous for Destouches to put to sea with the residue of the fleet.

De Tilley commanded the small squadron sent against Arnold. Finding his intended prey out of his reach, and fearing to be himself intercepted by a superior hostile force, he soon left the Bay and returned to Newport. Although disappointed in a favourite and important object, he was, in some degree, fortunate. He fell in with the *Romulus*, a British man of war of forty-four guns, which, totally unsuspecting of danger, was about to enter the Capes. This De Tilley made a prize, and carried into Newport.

In the *Romulus*, were persons formerly residing in Virginia, some of whom traitors, who deserved exemplary punishment—and others vindictive enemies to the State. For these persons, it was fortunate that the Allies thought it unworthy of their arms, to imitate the cruel policy adopted by Clinton and Cornwallis, in South Carolina.

Upon De Tilley's return, Destouches and Rochambeau, necessarily struck with the importance of the objects urged by Washington, resolved on a second expedition to the Chesapeak, with the whole fleet, and a detachment of eleven hundred men, under the command of Count De Viombreil. This measure better accorded with the martial ardor of the French officers and soldiers, than the languor and inactivity of Rhode-Island. During the winter, the Marquis De La Fayette, his brother in law, the Viscount De Noailles, the Count De Castine, the Marquis De Laval, Count De Damas, and several other distinguished officers, whom their zeal to serve America\* prompted to seek the opportunity of a winter's campaign to the Southward, had visited Virginia. They now rejoiced at the prospect of brilliant military successes in that State; but the hour had not yet come. Fortune seemed to delight in multiplying the incidents of a plot, the grand catastrophe of which she delayed only to make it the more striking and decisive.—After a conference with General Washington, in which the particulars of the expedition were arranged, the French Admiral sailed from Newport, and La Fayette continued his march to the Southward. With this second enterprize, the preparations mentioned by the Governor of Virginia in the last quoted letter, were connected.

The whole  
French fleet  
sails for the  
Chesapeak.

March 8.

\* These are the expressions of General Washington, in a letter which he wrote to Governor Jefferson, to introduce to him the Marquis De La Fayette, &c.



CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

Engage-  
ment be-  
tween Des-  
touches and  
Arbuthnot.General  
Phillips  
joins Ar-  
nold.

March 26.

Destouches was followed by Arbuthnot, who left Gardiner's Bay on the 10th, and overtook his opponent off Cape Henry. The two fleets were well poised in point of strength; for, although the British were superior in the number of their guns, and the weight of their metal, the French had more men. This point, however, is to be decided by naval critics only. In the thanks returned to the Chevalier Destouches by Congress, the British fleet is stated to have been of superior force.

Upon Arbuthnot overtaking the French fleet, an engagement became unavoidable. The conflict, however, was confined to a few ships. It lasted about one hour. Both sides claimed the victory. Destouches called a Council of War, and his return to Newport was judged expedient.—Thus was the traitor Arnold again rescued from the ignominious punishment due to his crimes...and Virginia again left to her own efforts...single-handed and almost unarmed. The congratulations of the Commander in Chief, and the gratitude of Congress, testified that the enterprize had been cheerfully entered upon, and the contest gallantly maintained. Yet, the accomplishment of the object in view was unfortunately marred—an issue which was soon followed by the arrival in the Bay, of two thousand additional troops, under the command of Major-General Phillips. On the 15th, General La Fayette had reached York. His troops had remained at Annapolis. The engagement on the 16th, and its consequences, grievously afflicted this gallant leader, who panted for action. He reluctantly retraced his route to the head of Elk, where his chagrin was somewhat soothed, by learning that the Commander in Chief and General Greene, had committed to him the defence of Virginia. The task was difficult, but glorious; it therefore, accorded with the active and soaring spirit of the young Marquis, who hastened to the theatre of his future operations. His corps, originally small, was, at first, hourly diminished by desertion. The troops composing the detachment, were mostly drawn from the Northern States; they feared the influence of a Southern climate; and having expected only a short expedition, they were unprovided with clothing suited to the approaching season. To counteract so many inauspicious circumstances, La Fayette employed those moral stimulants, the efficacy of which his own ardent and noble bosom had so often felt. Far from disguising to his men the perils and toils before them, he candidly opened to their view the difficulties of the enterprize; but, at the same time, he told them of the honor to be acquired...of the gratitude of their Southern brethren...of the foul scorn of deserting the post of danger...yet, if any of them, he added, were unwilling to proceed, they might apply to him for permits to return to their respective regiments. The appeal was not lost. Such chords are never vibrated in

vain, by a leader who is admired and beloved. From that moment, desertion ceased. Every one became eager to seek honourable fatigues and dangers. But La Fayette could not be indifferent to the wants of these brave men. Regardless of fortune, with no other passion but a chivalric love of fame, he borrowed from merchants in Baltimore, upon his own credit, sums sufficient to furnish his little army with shoes, linnen,\* spirits, and other articles of primary necessity. Rapid marches speedily brought him to Virginia.

CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

La Fayette  
arrives at  
Richmond,  
April 29.

So soon as the Governor was apprized of the return of the French fleet to Rhode-Island, and of the reinforcement which shortly after joined Arnold, he again cried aloud to Congress and the Commander in Chief for arms, and a body of regulars. The latter had now come: but the fatal want of arms was still felt. "I observe," wrote the Governor to the President of Congress, on the 28th of March, "a late resolve of Congress, for furnishing a number of arms to the Southern States; and I lately wrote to you on the subject of ammunition and cartridge paper. How much of this State the enemy, thus reinforced, may think proper to possess themselves of, must depend on their own moderation and caution, until these supplies arrive. We had hoped to have received by the French squadron, under Monsieur Destouches, eleven hundred stand of arms, which we have at Rhode-Island, but were disappointed."†

---

\* Let it never be forgotten that the ladies of Baltimore, cheerfully and quickly, made the summer clothes for the troops. Congress afterwards repaid those patriotic merchants.

† As it is only from specific details that the real situation of things can be understood, vague and declamatory narrative, leaving in the mind none but distorted images, we trust we will be forgiven for our frequent quotations. On the 3rd of April, 1781, a Member of the Virginia Delegation wrote to the Governor on the subject of these arms. "The letter from the Delegation by the last post, informed you of the arrival of the stores here, which were to have been delivered in Virginia by one of the French ships. The infinite importance of them to the State, especially since the arrival of a reinforcement to Arnold, of which we are just apprized by the Marquis, has determined the Delegates to forward them by land without loss of time. This will be attempted in the first instance, in the channel of the Quarter-Master's Department, and if it cannot be effected in that mode without delay, we propose to engage private waggons for the purpose, on the credit of the State. Should the latter alternative be embraced, I find it will be necessary to stipulate instantaneous payment from the Treasury, on the arrival of the waggons at Richmond, in *specie*, or the *old Continental currency*, to the *real* amount thereof. I mention this circumstance that you may be prepared for it. The expence of the transportation will be between five and six hundred pounds, Virginia money—the exchange between *specie* and the *old paper* is at present about 135 for 1."

Some time after this, when Virginia was over-run by the enemy, another Member of the Delegation wrote: "Exertion and unanimity are now more than ever requisite in the State of Virginia. Assistance will come but slowly—but I beseech you to avoid despair. It can only produce division, which will increase your distresses, without procuring for you one valuable end. This State, (the letter was from Philadelphia) and some others



CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

Phillips  
takes the  
command  
of the  
British  
troops.

State of the  
country.

Major-General Phillips had taken the command of the British troops at Portsmouth, to the great joy of the officers and men, who reluctantly served under Arnold; for, according to a trite remark founded in the immutable nature and relations of things, whilst treason is encouraged and rewarded, traitors are despised and hated. Phillips, after completing the fortifications at Portsmouth, commenced offensive operations. For some time he had been preparing a considerable number of boats; but whether he meant to go Southwardly, or up the river, no leading circumstance had yet decided. On the 7th of April, resolutions of Congress for removing stores, provisions, and horses from the counties of Accomack and Northampton, were transmitted to the Governor; but there were no military stores in those counties, except a few muskets in the hands of the militia. Some collections of forage and provisions belonging to the Continent, and to the State, had been made there...but such was, at the time, the condition of the Chesapeake Bay, that the Virginians could not even send an advice boat across it with any certainty, much less adventure on transportation. As to horses, those to be found in that part of the country were not such as the enemy could apply to the purposes of cavalry...and very few large enough for the draught. Nor did the enemy direct to those counties his principal attention. We have faithfully delineated the situation of the country. Many of the arms originally in the possession of the State, had been lost in the Carolinas...many had been sent to the West...and some destroyed in the late incursion of the foe. The financial embarrassments of the country had not permitted the Executive to give to their laboratories, adequate activity and extension. Legislative appropriations, which when directed, appeared largely equal to their objects, were by depreciation reduced to little more than mere nullities. Even the transportation of eleven hundred stand of arms from Philadelphia to Virginia, experienced great difficulties. It was an arduous matter to maintain regular expresses.\*—

in the Union, enjoy most of the blessings of peace; and attentive to other objects more pleasing, they are not willing to behold the distresses of Virginia. Congress is so destitute of money, and consequently of power, that if there was the most cordial disposition to give immediate and effectual assistance to the State, it is not practicable. I have no doubts, however, but that the campaign will end favourably for us; and it is not improbable that it may be the last. Be assured that while I do remain here, I shall not neglect to try every expedient which may promise any relief to the State.”

General Washington did all he could do, consistently with the general good.

\* “I have taken the liberty to set the Continental line of expresses in motion, which I hope our distress for arms will justify, though the errand be not purely Continental.” Governor Jefferson to the President of Congress, April 7, 1781. At this very time, Virginia was fighting the battles of the Union in the Carolinas, and in the West—(the cession of the Ter-



Want of arms...want of money...want of a regular force... Such were the causes of those multiplied injuries which, before the arrival of La Fayette, Phillips and Arnold inflicted on the country, without almost any opposition. Of these injuries, we are now to present an accurate view.

CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

On the 13th of April, the enemy came from Portsmouth up James river, with about two thousand five hundred men, embarked on board the smallest vessels of their fleet. They landed at Burwell's Ferry, below Williamsburg, and near the mouth of Chickahominy, above that town. This latter circumstance obliged Col. Innes, who, for the purpose of covering the country from depredation, was stationed with a body of militia on the North side of James river, to retire up the country, lest he should be placed between the two hostile bodies. One of these entered Williamsburg on the 20th; Simcoe was detached to York, where he spiked a few guns. Williamsburg contained no public stores, except those necessary for the daily use of the men stationed there. The State had a ship-yard on the Chickahominy: the enemy burnt there an unfinished 20 gun-ship—such of the stores belonging to the ship-yard as were moveable, had been carried some miles higher up the river—two small gallies had also retired to a more distant station for security—but nothing escaped the vigilance and enterprize of the invader—besides the immediate loss, and other vexatious consequences, produced by this predatory war, the circumstance of the militia being taken from their farms at the interesting and busy season of planting their maize, had an unfortunate effect on the crop of the ensuing year. The enemy leaving Williamsburg on the 22d, sailed directly up James river, and, on the 24th, landed at City-Point, on the Southern side of the confluence of Appomattox and James rivers. The next day, they marched up to Petersburg, where Baron Steuben received them with a body of militia, somewhat under 1,000 men. The Baron had marched the regular force of the State to the aid of General Greene, whose demands for troops were loud and urgent. Although the enemy were 2,300 strong, Steuben opposed their progress. For two hours, he skilfully and bravely disputed the ground with them; the assailants were twice broken, and precipitately ran back, until supported by fresh troops. During the interval of time just stated, they gained only one mile, and that by inches. The inferiority of the Virginians in number, obliged them to withdraw, about twelve miles up the Appomattox, till more militia should be assembled. They retired, in good order, over a bridge,

Depredations of Phillips and Arnold.  
April.

Affair at Petersburg.

ritory beyond the Ohio having now been agreed to) as will be presently related.

CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

April 27.

which was taken up as soon as the militia had passed, so as to secure their retreat. The whole loss of the Virginians in killed, wounded and taken, amounted to about 60. That sustained by the enemy was conjectured to be more considerable. At Petersburg, and in its neighbourhood, the British destroyed a large quantity of tobacco, and some small vessels. The destroyers, then dividing their means of destruction, proceeded, Phillips to Chesterfield Court House, where he destroyed some barracks, and a small quantity of flour; and Arnold to Osborne's, where he waged a similar war against the tobacco deposited in the ware-houses of that humble village.

April 30.

A few miles above Osborne's, the small marine strength of the State had taken a station which was deemed advantageous, at least, tenable. Arnold sent a flag to the commander of this flotilla, demanding the surrender of his force. A defiance was returned, upon which some artillery was ordered up to a safe and favourable point on the bank of the river. The effect of this was decisive; and the Virginians, after scuttling and setting on fire their vessels, escaped to the opposite shore. In his thrasonic account of this expedition, Arnold has greatly exaggerated the substance, and altered the form. Abundant injury was, however, inflicted in the course of this incursion, which but too fully realized the mode of warfare announced by the British Commissioners. Near Warwick, Phillips and Arnold again uniting their forces, marched to Manchester, where a considerable quantity of tobacco was likewise burnt. The enemy had intended to pay another visit to Richmond; but La Fayette having arrived there the preceding day, and been immediately joined by numbers of militia, compelled them to abandon this design. Returning to Warwick, they repeated their favourite scenes of conflagration and plunder, destroying all the tobacco at that place, some very fine mills, a rope-yard, tan-house full of hides and bark, together with magazines of flour, and some shipping.—Ill armed and untried militia, who never before saw the face of an enemy, had, at times, during the course of the war, given occasion of exultation to the enemy; but the veterans of Britain themselves, while at Warwick, afforded a little satisfaction in the same way. Six or eight hundred picked men of the enemy's light infantry, with General Arnold at their head, having crossed the river from Warwick, fled from a patrol of sixteen horse, every man into his boat, as quickly as he could, some pushing North, some South, as their fears drove them.

From Warwick, the whole of the British armament proceeded to Bermuda Hundred, the Northern point of land within the confluence of Appomattox and James rivers, and thence fell down towards Williamsburg. On

the 6th of May, Phillips was below Burwell's Ferry, when, upon the arrival of a boat from Portsmouth with dispatches, he gave a signal, and the whole crowded sail up the river again with a fair wind and tide, and on the 7th, came to anchor at Brandon. There six days provisions were dealt out to every man: the army was then landed; and, on the 9th, marched into Petersburg.

Upon the retrograde movement of the enemy, La Fayette had taken a position between Chickahominy and Pamunky rivers, so as equally to cover Richmond and some other interesting ports of the State. General Nelson was detached with some militia towards Williamsburg, to watch the motions of the hostile force. The return of Phillips up the river led the Marquis to think that Richmond was threatened. To that place, he therefore quickly repaired with his little army. Intelligence, not to be doubted, had just been received by the Governor that Cornwallis had, on the 1st of May, advanced from Wilmington half way to Halifax. From this intelligence, and from the circumstance of Phillips having landed at Brandon, it was obvious that the two British armies contemplated a junction, and that Petersburg had been fixed upon as the place of their rendezvous. Towards that town, La Fayette immediately marched, intending to take possession of it,\* and thus to thwart the design of the foe. But he was anticipated by Phillips, who, though labouring under a mortal disease, communicated to the British army the activity of his own mind. So rapid were his movements that Captain Muir, and Major Mitchel, whom the Marquis had detached to Petersburg, to collect boats for the passage of his army, were surprised, and made prisoners. The position of the British being unassailable, especially by so small a force as that under La Fayette, it was deemed expedient again to cross James river, and to encamp at Wilton, a few miles below Richmond, whence the military stores were promptly removed, and deposited at different places on James river, but principally at Albemarle old Court house.—General Wayne had been ordered to reinforce La Fayette, with eight hundred men of the Pennsylvania line—in a letter to General Washington, the Marquis thus dispels the fears which a knowledge of his ardent spirit might have suggested to the American Fabius: “Many considerations have induced me to think that with our so very great inferiority, and the advantage the enemy have by their cavalry, there

Movements  
of Phillips  
for a junction  
with  
Cornwallis.

La Fayette  
encamps at  
Wilton.

May 18.

\* H. Lee says, that La Fayette “was too sagacious to have risked the bold measure of occupying Petersburg.” The Marquis, however, intimates that intention in his letter to General Washington, May 18th, 1781, (from Wilton.) We do not pretend to determine whether the measure was rash or not—we only state the fact, upon the authority of La Fayette himself—unless, indeed, his letter was part of the *feint* attributed to him, in that case.



CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

May.

Phillips  
dies at Pe-  
tersburg.

“ would be much rashness in fighting them on any but our own ground, and this side of the river ; and that an engagement which I fear will soon be necessary, ought to be deferred till the Pennsylvanians arrive, whom I have, by several letters, requested to hasten to our assistance.” —Combining with the fervor of youth the prudence of maturer years, the gallant La Fayette happily adhered to this salutary caution. At this time, he was strengthening himself with militia as far as arms, either public or private could be collected, on the North side of James river.—General, late Colonel Lawson, made correspondent exertions South of the Appomattox. The command of the militia, in that part of the State was entrusted to him.—A very dangerous practice had been introduced by the enemy, of laying under paroles, the whole country through which they were, at any time, able to march, and thereby attempting to disarm its future opposition : this rendered it necessary for the Governor to take up and reprobate the idea, that any citizen might thus cancel his duties to his country. He issued a proclamation declaring the nullity of such paroles ; and requiring those persons who had already taken them, and thought them obligatory, “ forthwith to repair to some of the posts, encampments, or vessels of the forces of his Britannic Majesty, and by surrender of their persons to cancel such engagements, and thereafter to do as themselves, and those in whose power they should be, should think fit, save only that they should not rejoin the Commonwealth, but in a state of perfect emancipation from its enemies, and of freedom to act as becomes good and zealous citizens.”—This produced, to a great extent, the desired effect—and paroles of this description no longer deprived the State of the services of a considerable part of its inhabitants.

Major General Phillips died at Petersburg, on the 13th of May. His fame, hitherto refulgent, was eclipsed in this vindictive expedition, where he held the torch of the incendiary, rather than the sword of the soldier.—Here, indeed, “ the pomp and circumstance of war,” totally disappeared. It seemed as if Arnold had breathed his own ignoble spirit into that army which his presence disgraced—as if the pollution of his baseness had contaminated whatever of military purity was left to Britons.—But why accuse either Arnold or Phillips ! They acted under the high sanction of their masters. On their masters, then let the indignation of mankind weigh ! “ when governments,” says H. Lee, who, at that very time, was nobly opposing in the field, British tyranny, “ adopt the policy of plunder and conflagration, they owe to the world as well as to their nation, the justification of such departure from the liberal usage of war. In every condition of things, such justification is difficult ; in this state of affairs, it was im-

“ practicable. The subjugation of the weakest portion of  
 “ the Union, to which alone all the disposable force of  
 “ Great Britain had been and was devoted, began to be  
 “ viewed as chimerical even by the British officers. The  
 “ battle of Guilford had fixed an impression on the condi-  
 “ tion of the war, which audibly declared the futility even  
 “ of victory itself. To burn and to destroy where no hope  
 “ of effecting the object could exist but with the infatuated,  
 “ was not less cruel than disgraceful. That the only peo-  
 “ ple in the world, understanding and enjoying political li-  
 “ berty, powerful and enlightened, the brethren of Locke,  
 “ of Newton and of Hampden, should encourage by their  
 “ example, a return to barbarism, affords a melancholy  
 “ proof of the inefficiency of the arts and sciences, the  
 “ sweets of civilization, nay, even of liberty itself, over pas-  
 “ sion supported by power. The British nation being  
 “ guided by ministers without talents, disappointment could  
 “ not but ensue to many of their enterprizes; which, em-  
 “ bittering the heart instead of correcting the head, pro-  
 “ duced this baneful system, so destructive of the comfort,  
 “ of Virginia; keeping up a stock of irritation and hate  
 “ to be dissipated only by the force of time.”

That Phillips was, in the course of this expedition intox-  
 icated with the hope of subjugating Virginia, sufficiently  
 appears from the want of temper and decency, which he  
 frequently manifested. The annexed extract of a letter,  
 written by the Governor to the Delegates of Virginia in  
 Congress, (May 10) shews, in a strong light, the haughty  
 tone already assumed by the invader: —————

Haughti-  
ness of the  
enemy.

“ General Scott obtained permission from the comman-  
 “ dant at Charleston, for vessels with necessary supplies, to  
 “ go from hence to our captive citizens, but instead of send-  
 “ ing the original, sent only a copy of the permission taken  
 “ by his Brigade Major. I applied to General Phillips to  
 “ supply this omission by furnishing a passport for the ves-  
 “ sel. Having just before taken great offence at a threat  
 “ of retaliation in the treatment of prisoners, he enclosed  
 “ his answer to my letter under this address: “ *To Thomas*  
 “ *Jefferson, Esq American Governor of Virginia.*” I paused  
 “ on receiving the letter, and for some time would not open  
 “ it. However, when the miserable condition of our bre-  
 “ thren in Charleston occurred to me, I could not deter-  
 “ mine that they should be left without the necessities of  
 “ life, while a punctilio should be discussing between the  
 “ British General and myself; and knowing that I had an  
 “ opportunity of returning the compliment to Mr. Phillips,  
 “ in a case perfectly corresponding, I opened the letter.

“ Very shortly after, I received, as I expected, the per-  
 “ mission of the Board of War for the flag vessel then in  
 “ Hampton-road, with clothing and refreshments, to pro-

CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

“ceed to Alexandria. I enclosed and addressed it, to William Phillips, Esq. commanding the British forces in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Personally knowing Phillips to be the proudest man of the proudest nation on earth, I well know he will not open this letter; but having occasion, at the same time, to write to Captain Gerlach, the flag master, I informed him that the Convention troops in this State\* should perish for want of necessaries, before any should be carried to them through this State, till General Phillips either swallowed this pill of retaliation, or made an apology for his rudeness: and in this, should the matter come ultimately to Congress, we hope for their support.

“He has the less right to insist on the expedition of his flag, because his letter, instead of enclosing a passport to expedite ours, contained only an evasion of the application, by saying he had referred it to Sir Henry Clinton; and, in the mean time, he has come up the river, and taken the vessel with her loading which he had chartered and prepared to send to Charleston, and which wanted nothing but the passport to enable her to depart.

“I would further observe to you that this gentleman’s letters to the Baron Steuben, first, and afterwards to the Marquis Fayette, have been in a stile so intolerably insolent and haughty, that both these gentlemen have been obliged to inform him that, if he thinks proper to address them again in the same spirit, all intercourse must cease.”

Cornwallis  
arrives,  
May 20.

By the death of Phillips, the command of the British troops in Virginia again devolved on Arnold; but the proposed junction having been, soon after, effected at Petersburg, Cornwallis assumed, of course the direction of the whole.

Here we are naturally led to take a retrospective view of the events in consequence of which this new army had thus penetrated into Virginia. A few detached occurrences, however, first claim our attention.

The General Assembly broke up on the 2d of January. Previous to their adjournment, a resolution† was passed,

---

\* The British, as we have seen, had been removed to Fredericktown in Maryland—the Germans, on account of this new invasion, had been marched to Winchester.—Alexandria was the most convenient place for flags to both those points.—“I shall be sorry,” wrote the Governor to Captain Gerlach, “if this shall prevent your being availed of the passport, as it will produce an eternal bar to the passage through this State, of any thing to the Convention troops. I have had yet, no reason to repent the services I have endeavoured to render the GERMAN part of the Convention officers and Soldiers.”

† See Appendix.



favourable to the wishes of Congress in respect to the vacant Territory, North West of the Ohio. To this liberal measure, the State was induced by a desire of accelerating the general ratification of the confederacy. "I shall be happy, wrote the Governor, upon transmitting this resolution to the President of Congress, if the other States of the Union equally impressed with the necessity of the important convention in prospect, shall be willing to sacrifice equally to its completion. This single event, could it take place shortly, would outweigh every success which the enemy have hitherto obtained, and render desperate the hopes to which those successes have given birth." To this resolution was appended the sense of the Legislature in respect to the navigation of the Mississippi, and a free port on that river.

The confederation was completed in the course of the following month; but from its defects, and especially from that fatal want of coercive powers in Congress, to which we have alluded, it did not produce those decisive advantages which its zealous advocates, and among them the Governor of Virginia, had fondly expected.

Perseveringly adhering to his design against Detroit, Clarke employed several months in indefatigable, but finally unsuccessful efforts, to collect a force adequate to the enterprize. A body of 2,000 men was thought necessary for the expedition. The Illinois regiment, Crockett's battalion, Major Slaughter's corps, and detachments of militia from the counties of Fayette, Lincoln, Jefferson, Ohio, Monongalia, Hampshire, Berkeley, Frederic, and Greenbrier, were to compose the Western army; Clarke, raised to the rank of Brigadier General, was to have the Chief command. Next to him was the brave Colonel Gibson. By the 15th of March, the different corps were to rendezvous at the falls of the Ohio—to proceed down that river and then up the Wabash.—Clarke was well acquainted with the remainder of the route. In his judgment, bravery, and abilities, unbounded confidence was reposed. The militia of Frederic and Berkely manifested great reluctance to be employed in this distant and hazardous service.

Those counties transmitted representations on the subject, to the Executive: and open disobedience was intimated\* from various quarters. In the present critical situation of the Commonwealth, nothing was so much to be deprecated as intestine discord. The original destination of these draughts was, therefore, prudently altered; and, instead of the five hundred and sixty men which they would have placed under Clarke, Baron Steuben added two hundred regulars to his command. But other innumerable

## CHAP. XVIII.

1781

Resolution of the Virginia Legislature, to cede to the U. States the Western Territory.

January 2.

The confederation is completed.

The plan against Detroit is abandoned.

\* Letter from Executive to General Clarke—February 19, 1781.

CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

Successful  
expedition  
against the  
Cherokees.

January.

and insuperable difficulties arose ; owing to these, as well as to the rapid and momentous events of which Virginia was the theatre in 1781, and to the deranged state of the public finances, the ardent genius of Clarke was chained down to defensive operations.

Colonel Arthur Campbell, one of the conquerors of Furguson, continued to exert his useful activity in the South-West. Informed that the restless spirit of the Cherokee Indians was preparing fresh hostilities, he resolved to avert the storm by carrying war into their country. Their towns were destroyed ; their fields ravaged ; several of their warriors slain ; and many others taken. The two Carolinas inflicted similar blows on these turbulent neighbours ; and a peace, necessary to both sides, was the consequence. A Fort, erected at the confluence of the Tennessee and Holston rivers, was productive to the back country of many beneficial effects—ensuring the full command of the new conquest—keeping the Cherokee nation at the mercy of the Americans—preventing the further intrigues of the British Emissaries—opening a communication with the friendly tribe of the Chickasaws—and with the American posts on the Mississippi—finally, protecting the route to Kentucky, and indeed, the whole South-Western frontier.

Notwithstanding the unceasing exertions of Gates to atone for the unfortunate affair at Camden, he had resigned into the hands of Greene, a command fraught with difficulties scarcely conceivable. The army was small : the greater part of it consisted of ill disciplined, ill armed militia : supplies were scanty, irregular, precarious. These difficulties, however, neither damped the ardor nor confused or overwhelmed the judgment of Greene. In the arduous campaigns of the North, experience had familiarized him with the deficiencies incident to the existing state of things. To these he opposed the vigor and resources of his energetic mind. As he could not annihilate the enemy by a brilliant and decisive blow, he adopted that system which, by incessant annoyance, would gradually consume their strength ; and he saved the South as it was to be saved, by the utmost prudence happily combined with the utmost activity. And he was peculiarly fortunate in the aid of zealous and able officers, as well as of troops uncommonly brave.

Successful  
stratagem  
of Lieutenant  
Colonel Wash-  
ington.

A singular smile of fortune marked the first moments of his command. Just before his arrival at Charlotte, Gates had ordered Morgan and Washington, from Smallwood's advance on the Yadkin, upon a foraging excursion. Washington proceeded as far as Rugeley's farm, within 12 miles of Camden, intending to surprise a party of the enemy stationed there. Surprise, however, was impracticable. The efficacy of stratagem had been evinced, on

the Ogeechee,\* in such a way as to render plausible the most eccentric attempts. Washington, well acquainted with the character of Rugely, who commanded the hostile party, gave to a pine-log, elevated on its branches a few feet from the ground, the air, semblance, and attitude of a field piece, ready to batter down the enemy's fortress, which an abattis rendered inaccessible to cavalry.—It was merely a logged barn, defended by Rugely with 106 men. Washington having, with most formidable parade, pointed his artillery against the hostile citadel, humanely sent a flag to its commander, requiring submission, and making him answerable for the dreadful effusions of blood which must unavoidably follow, in case of resistance. The vivid imagination of Rugely and his men, finishing the outlines, and, probably, magnifying the size of Washington's ordnance, the commandant and the garrison surrendered at discretion—calling on a generous victor to attest the untenable situation of the Fort against heavy metal, and their yielding only to superior force. The captives, with other trophies of this bloodless victory, reached Charlotte nearly at the same time as General Greene.

The Southern army amounted, at this time, to little more than 2,000 men. To facilitate its subsistence, to narrow the limits of Cornwallis, and to feed that flame of opposition which the oppressive and overbearing conduct of the haughty invaders had rekindled in almost every breast, Greene divided his force—detaching Morgan to the South side of the Catawba—and himself taking a position at Hick's Creek, on the East-side of the Pedee, opposite Cheraw-hill.

Morgan is detached towards  
Ninety-Six.

Morgan stationed his corps, consisting of four hundred Continental infantry, under Lieutenant Colonel Howard, two companies of the Virginia militia, commanded by Captains Trippett and Taite, and Washington's dragoons about 90 in number, with reinforcements of mountain militia, under General Pickens, the whole forming ultimately an aggregate of 800 men. The strength and enterprise of this corps, were severely felt by the loyalists: at Hammond's store, Washington cut in pieces and dispersed a body of 300 royal militia from Georgia. This galling annoyance of his friends, and his belief that Morgan intended an attack upon Ninety-Six, considerably alarmed Cornwallis. He was still at Wynn'sborough, preparing

\* Colonel John White, of Georgia, with 4 others only, took Capt. French, 112 British regulars, 5 vessels and their crews, and 130 stand of arms.—The fact is well ascertained.—See *Ramsay's S. Carolina*, Vol. 2, P. 42. Yet, such egregious folly as that of French, is scarcely credible—and tho' there is no risk in attempting such stratagems, they are so ludicrous as themselves to appear improbable.—The maxim that, "in war nothing ought to be neglected," is strongly elucidated by such occurrences.



**CHAP.** for his long meditated expedition into North Carolina.  
**XVIII.** Leslie, with one thousand five hundred auxiliaries, was now at Camden. To annihilate Morgan, or, at least, to prevent his re-union with Greene, appeared all important to the British General. He, therefore, detached the rapid Tarleton with his legion, part of two regiments of infantry, and a body of artillery with two field pieces, in all about one thousand men. Tarleton of course was superior to Morgan in every thing but courage. His orders were, to cross the Broad river, strike Morgan, and push him to the utmost, or, at least, to force him to leave the country. At the same time, Cornwallis took the upper route to North Carolina, marching between the Catawba and Broad rivers, while Leslie moved up along the banks of the former, with directions to join the main army at a certain point. Should Morgan escape Tarleton, Cornwallis relied on his interception by himself.

1781

January 16.

Morgan was inclined to close with Tarleton, on the very ground which he had originally occupied ; but the advance of Cornwallis made his stay dangerous. He therefore began a retreat. The swelling of the water-courses, and other difficulties of the route, delayed the progress of the main British army. Tarleton, who had only light troops, moved more quickly. Reaching the encampment of Morgan a few hours after it had been abandoned, he left there his baggage under a guard with directions to follow the next day, and himself pressed onward with the rest of his troops, in pursuit of an enemy, whose retreat was reluctant, and consequently less rapid than it might otherwise have been.—Disdaining to cross Broad river, only a short distance in his front, or to retire to a mountainous region which he might easily have reached in his first march, Morgan halted at the Cowpens, a spot about three miles from the boundary-line between South and North Carolina. At dawn of day, on the 17th, he received intelligence of Tarleton's approach, and immediately prepared for battle.

Battle of  
the Cow-  
pens.

Morgan has been censured for this determination—and likewise for the ground of which he made choice : victory absolved him.

The disposition of Morgan for the impending conflict, is acknowledged to have been masterly. He drew up his little army in two lines ; the first consisted entirely of militia, and was commanded by Pickens. In front of this, two bodies of volunteers were stationed, the one from North Carolina, under M'Dowell, and the other from Georgia, under Cunningham. The 2d line, consisting of Howard's Continentals and Triplett's and Taite's militia, was drawn up, a few hundred yards in the rear of the first, upon an eminence in an open wood. In this line, Morgan himself took his station. At some distance behind the whole, was

Lieutenant Colonel Washington with his cavalry, and about 45 militia men, mounted and armed with swords—forming a *corps de reserve*. The volunteers in front, were ordered to feel the enemy as he approached, give a single fire, and fall back with the first line, where they could renew the conflict. To the first line, directions were given to deliver a close fire, then retire in order, and then form again on the right of the Continentals. The cavalry was to charge, whenever a charge should be deemed proper. Washington's judgment was relied on, no less than his bravery.—After this disposition, and these orders, Morgan riding along the different lines, harangued his troops with that unadorned but powerful eloquence, which flows from the heart and sound sense. There were motives enough to stimulate every one on the ground, to act like a man and a patriot. A republican army does not consist merely of mechanical agents—possessed of celerity, precision and symmetry of movements. With the soldier who fights for what he understands and loves, the impulse is from within—and Morgan knew, as well as any orator, what chords he must touch.—Every thing wore a promising appearance—trusting in Heaven, in his brave comrades, and in himself, Morgan calmly waited for the foe.

Tarleton had taken two American videts, and received from them intelligence of the situation of his foe. A resolution to attack was the immediate consequence. Contemptuous was his opinion of the American troops: high his confidence in himself and his chosen corps. Advancing within a few hundred yards of Morgan's front, he, with impatient haste, ordered the light and legion infantry, and the 7th regiment to form in line, with a captain and sixty dragoons on each flank; the rest of the cavalry, and a battalion of the 71st regiment, formed the reserve, to act according to future orders. Before the line was fully formed, the impetuous Tarleton rushed to the attack—his men shouting after the Indian manner. M'Dowell and Cunningham fired, and quickly fell in with the militia under Pickens. The front line, faithful to Morgan's orders, poured on the advancing foe a close and well directed volley; and retired to the right of the Continentals, some of the militia, however, running to their horses, which had been tied in the rear, and which it was thought expedient to remove. In the eyes of the assailants, these were so many indications of a flight; they already considered the day as their own. Eagerly pressing against the second line, on which rested Morgan's chief hope, they attacked it with fury: they were received with unshaken firmness. Howard, fearing to be enveloped by superior numbers, ordered a company on its right to charge its front and face the enemy. The order was mistaken, and that company fell back. The rest of the line did the same, supposing an

CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

intention of forming again on more advantageous ground. At this moment General Morgan rode up—and ordered the line to retreat towards the cavalry, and there make a last stand. This order was executed with great precision. The British had now brought up their reserve, and they, more than ever, exulted in their thoughts of an entire victory. They impetuously, and in some disorder, continued to advance, when Howard ordered his men to halt, and face the enemy. The fire of the Americans was not less murderous than unexpected to the foe. The most advanced of the British recoiled in confusion upon those behind. Howard now charged with the bayonet; and was joined by some of the militia, in the renewed conflict. The British line was soon broken; and Washington having almost at the same moment, engaged a detachment of the hostile cavalry, that had passed the flanks of the Continentals while retiring, and fallen upon some scattered militia, the route became general. The British veterans laid down their arms to the American militia. Howard and Washington rapidly pursued. That portion of the British cavalry which had not been engaged, retreated in perfect order, and Washington's numbers were inefficient to make an impression upon them. In the eagerness of pursuit, he outstripped his regiment, and was attacked by Tarleton and two of his officers, who wheeled about, and charged him. He defended himself with dauntless intrepidity—a serjeant and a bugler having happily come up at this critical moment, Tarleton and his two companions were wounded in the struggle, and found it difficult to escape.

The loss of the British was considerable.\* The importance of this victory was felt on both sides. It broke the talisman of terror which Tarleton had hitherto held over the heads of the militia; it invigorated the spirits and the hopes of the patriots; and discouraged the friends of Great Britain. Stedman ascribes to it every disaster that subsequently befel Lord Cornwallis; and Ramsay considers it as “the first link in a grand chain of causes which finally drew down ruin, both in North and South Carolina, on the royal interest.”

Congress justly rewarded Morgan, and his brave officers—some with medals, others with swords. The whole army received a tribute of commendation and gratitude.†

---

\* General Stevens, who was with General Greene at the time, and consequently had opportunities of good information on this subject, makes, in one of his letters, the following statement:

British killed on the field, upwards of 100, including 10 or 12 officers—Wounded, between 200 and 300—Prisoners, 502 privates and 29 officers—Taken, 2 brass field-pieces—2 standards—800 stand of arms—35 waggons and all the enemy's baggage—100 horses.

Americans—10 killed—55 wounded, among whom, 3 Virginian officers.

† General Stevens grievously lamented his *hard fate*, in having no opportunity of serving his country in battle. On the 24th January, he wrote to



CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

Cornwallis  
pursues  
Morgan.

January 29

Attempt on  
George-  
Town.

Cornwallis, though deeply affected with this misfortune, no less severe than unexpected, adhered to his plan of an incursion into North Carolina. The junction with Leslie was quickly formed; and, with a view to intercept Morgan, now encumbered with baggage and prisoners, at the Fords of the Catawba. But Morgan, conscious of his danger, abandoned part of the baggage; left the wounded with surgeons, under the protection of a flag; immediately ordered the prisoners towards Virginia, under a guard of militia; and, crossing Broad river at the upper Fords, rapidly proceeded to the Catawba. Yet, such was the celerity of Lord Cornwallis, that his van appeared on the banks of that river in less than 2 hours after the Americans had crossed it. In the night, an immense flood of rain rendered the river impassable: it continued so for 2 days, and Morgan thus obtained time to secure his prisoners, and refresh his wearied troops.

General Greene, while on the Pedee, had been joined by Lieut. Col. late Major Lee with his legion, amounting to about 280 in infantry and cavalry. Lee was immediately directed to co-operate with Marion, who continued to annoy the foe, between the Pedee and the Santee. They jointly formed a plan to surprize George-Town. Their success was only partial; the British commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Campbell, and part of the garrison were made prisoners, and left on their paroles.—Attentive to all the movements of Cornwallis, Greene had advised

the Governor.——“In my former letters, I informed you what troops Morgan’s command was composed of. They, in general, behaved well; though it adds greatly to my satisfaction, that the detachment of Virginia militia under the immediate command of Trippett, are spoken of with the greatest applause for their behaviour on that day. This, I hope, will wipe off some of the stain of the 16th of August. I am truly unfortunate, as I could not partake in the doing of it; and am rendered now much more so, as I have not the smallest glimpse of hope left of doing any thing in that way with those men who are under my immediate command, as their time is just about expiring, and I am ordered to march in the morning to take charge of the prisoners, and conduct them to Virginia. (This was altered.) I must endeavour to reconcile myself to my hard fate. Colonel Washington of cavalry, distinguished himself in a particular manner. He, with only 50 horse, charged the enemy’s cavalry and drove them. Among the prisoners is the noted Maj. M’Carty, of the 71st, who has done so much mischief in this part of the country by fire. He and Colonel Tarleton were the only two field officers in the detachment. The latter got off with a wound in his arm.”

☞ The commissioned officers from Virginia, at the battle of the Cowpens, were:

*Of the 3d regiment of dragoons.*

Lieut. Col. Wm. Washington,  
Major Richard Call,  
Capt. Bennett,  
Lieut. Bell.

*Light Infantry.*

Lieut. Barnes,  
Lieut. Miller,  
Ensign King.

*Militia.*

Major Trippett,  
Captain Taite,  
Captain Buchanan,  
Captain Gilmore,  
Ensign Combs,  
Ensign M’Corkill,  
Ensign Wilson.

# CHAP. XVIII.

1781

January 31.

Morgan to effect a retreat, even before he was apprized of his success — When he received the joyful intelligence, and, at the same time, beheld the junction of Cornwallis and Leslie, and their pursuit after Morgan, he completed his arrangements for the intended march of the main army, which he left under the command of General Huger, while himself, escorted by a few dragoons, hastened to Morgan, whom he found encamped at Sherwood's Ford.

February 1.

Brigadier General Stevens, who had been ordered to Salisbury, to take charge of the prisoners, and escort them to Charlottesville, in Virginia, was, by the immense flood of rain just alluded to, detained on the route; on the night of the 1st of February, he was still 12 miles from Salisbury, when Major Bennett, General Greene's Aid de-Camp, came to inform him of the imminent danger of the Southern army. Cornwallis, before he reached the Catawba, had caused all the superfluous baggage of his army, commencing with his own, to be burnt or otherwise destroyed, reserving only a few waggons loaded with hospital stores, salt and ammunition, and some for the conveyance of the sick and wounded. Early in the morning of the first day of February, he had crossed the Catawba at M'Cowan's and Beattie's Fords. General Davidson, in opposing the passage of the British, had unfortunately been killed. Tarleton had dispersed a body of militia at Tanant's tavern; and the whole British army was rapidly advancing towards the Yadkin. Huger had been ordered not to march to Salisbury, but to alter his route, so as to effect the contemplated junction at some higher point. Morgan had intended to retire to Virginia by the Mountain-road, but this scheme, which would have saved only one division of the Southern army, could not be approved by Greene, who, having dispatched the prisoners to Virginia, under an escort of militia from North-Carolina, was busily employed in sending all the public stores from Salisbury over the Yadkin, at the Trading Ford. By Greene's orders, Stevens repaired to that place. The Yadkin had been so much swelled by the late rains, that it could with difficulty be crossed even in boats. On the 3rd of February, in the evening, the enemy appeared at the river. By this time, Greene had conveyed every thing over the Yadkin, except a waggon or two. These the enemy obtained, but at some cost. A party of Virginia riflemen, consisting of about one hundred, under the command of Major Campbell, and a small band of North Carolina mounted militia, were formed in ambuscade to receive the foe, with orders to pour on their advance a fire or two, and then retire down the river, to a place where boats had been stationed for their passage. This was executed with great alertness and skill, and the enemy lost several of their men.

General  
Greene re-  
treats over  
the Yadkin.

After crossing the Yadkin, Greene could scarcely muster eight hundred men fit for action, and in this number must be included the militia under Stevens, whose time had now expired. Fruitless endeavours\* were made to prevail on those men to remain with Greene, until he should be joined by the division under Huger.—Stevens, unwilling to dismiss them until their arms should be deposited at some safe and convenient place, and unable to detain them, left Greene and his small party, between the Trading Ford and Guilford Court-house, and marched with his men towards Virginia, taking charge of a few prisoners, who had been left behind. At Pittsylvania Court house, his men restless and impatient even under this small delay, were discharged, and their arms secured, but Stevens paused for new toils—he immediately applied to raising and arming a new corps.

The continuance of rain again retarded British pursuit : during the night, the Yadkin became unfordable, and the American General had not omitted to secure all the boats on its Northern margin. Cornwallis, unable to prevent the junction of Greene and Huger, resolved, at least to intercept his retreat to Virginia, and compel him to an action, which, under the difference of force in the two armies, would probably prove ruinous to the Americans. Erroneously informed that the Dan was impassable for the retreating armies, except at the upper fords, as a sufficient number of boats could not be procured to cross it near its confluence with the Roanoke, he resolved to preclude Greene from the only passage thus deemed practicable, and for that purpose to march towards the upper Dan. He, therefore, moved up the Yadkin, which he crossed at the shallow fords, and then pointed his route to the Dan, keeping Greene on his right. The junction between the two divisions of the Southern army was effected at Guilford Court-house, on the 7th of February. A council of war was held ; and the expediency of pressing the retreat, universally assented to.—Upon the suggestion of Lieutenant Colonel Carrington, Quarter Master General, it was resolved to cross at Boyd's and Irwin's ferries—and that officer was charged with the necessary preparations. A light

Designs of  
Cornwallis.

\* Nothing could be so mortifying to Stevens as this backwardness of his men. He says in a letter, dated North Carolina, Guilford County, Feb 8, 1781: "I saw the greatest necessity of these men remaining a few days, till the troops from General Greene's camp could get up, and this the General requested me to endeavour to bring about. I had them paraded, and addressed them on the subject ; but to my great mortification and astonishment, scarce a man would agree to it—and gave for answer, *he was a good soldier who served his time out.* If the salvation of the country had depended on their staying ten or fifteen days, I do not believe they would have done it."—We will see the patriotic Stevens consoled in some measure, by the better conduct of his new militia, at the battle of Guilford Court-house.



CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

Greene  
crosses the  
Dan,  
Feb'r. 14.

corps was formed, consisting of Washington's cavalry, Lee's legion, some militia riflemen, and the elite of Howard's infantry; that corps was to advance between the two armies—annoying the one—and protecting the other. No officer was better fitted than Morgan usefully to direct the operations of such a corps: unfortunately, he had long been afflicted with rheumatism, and he was compelled not only to decline this important service, but to retire from the army; a circumstance universally regretted—Colonel Ocho Williams, of Maryland, an officer of acknowledged merit, accepted the momentous trust, and the army took the determined route.—The stores and heavy baggage had been hastened on to Prince Edward Court-house in Virginia—the march was difficult—replete with danger and fatigue—but the object was finally accomplished. On the 14th of February, the passage of the Dan was completed; and the army placed, for a time, in the enjoyment of security and repose. So rapid and so menacing was the pursuit of the British, that Lieutenant-Colonel Lee, who has given to his country and to the world an interesting narrative of this retreat, and other achievements in which he himself bore a distinguished part, once was in contact with the hostile van, killed eighteen of Tarleton's dragoons, made Captain Miller and some of his men prisoners, with the loss of his unfortunate bugler, who, though unarmed, and imploring mercy, fell, while separated from his comrades, under the unsparing sabres of the British cavalry.\*

A retreat of nearly two hundred miles, executed almost without loss, in the depth of winter, under every want and every hardship, in the face of a superior enemy, pursuing with keen pertinacity, reflected infinite honour on the General and the army.

Upon receiving intelligence of Greene's movements, the Executive of Virginia, immediately concerted measures for strengthening him in the position which he contemplated. Seven hundred riflemen were ordered from the counties of Washington, Montgomery and Bedford; and five hundred common militia from Pittsylvania and Henry; five hundred new regular levies were also speedily marched from Chesterfield Court-house. General Greene himself had called for aid on the Southern counties. Stevens accelerated these reinforcements; armed part of them with the muskets of his late militia; and rejoined the Southern army. Still flattering himself with hopes of usefulness and fame—and, if his country could not be saved, resolved to bury himself under its ruins.

Cornwallis  
marches to

Cornwallis, baffled in his favourite scheme of annihilating, at one blow, all further resistance in the Carolinas,

\* See Lee's Memoirs, vol. 1, page 277, and following.

proceeded to Hillsborough by easy marches, boasting of empire and now undisturbed conquest, and, by proclamation, recalling the people to the situation and duties of British subjects. Disaffection had always been extensive in North-Carolina, especially, among the Scotch settlers, who, with very few exceptions, were all at heart hostile to the principles and measures of the revolution. A communication between the most disaffected settlements and the British post at Wilmington, where Major Craig had landed and established himself without opposition, towards the close of January, though imperfectly opened, had kept alive the ardent attachment of the inhabitants in those parts to the royal cause; and now, when the loyalists had nothing to restrain their deeply-rooted partialities, but the recollection of past chastisement, and every thing to encourage and call forth their mistaken zeal and fidelity, it was easy to anticipate the result. In many parts of Carolina, the people were, indeed, strongly attached to the common cause—but it was to be feared lest their fatigues, their sufferings, their privations, their sacrifices during the war, and their consciousness of their inability, if left to themselves, to resist the enemy, should lead them to acquiesce in the authority of the invader. Of all this Greene was fully sensible. He, therefore, recrossed the Dan. Lee's cavalry preceded; and the whole army soon followed.—“When the enemy first took their departure from the Dan,” Greene wrote to Governor Jefferson, “they had every prospect of great reinforcements from the Tories of Carolina; and I reflected that, if they were permitted to roam at large in the State, it would indubitably impress the idea of conquest upon the minds of the disaffected, and, perhaps, occasion those who were wavering in their sentiments, to take a decisive and active part against us. I instantly determined (as the most effectual measure to prevent it) to advance into the State without waiting for those reinforcements which the spirit of the Virginians, at that time, seemed to promise me. It was necessary to convince the Carolinians that they were not conquered; and by affording immediate protection to their property, to engage the continuance of their confidence and friendship”—Greene had encumbered himself as little as possible with baggage and stores. The cavalry followed the movements of Tarleton, who had been detached over the Haw. to favour the rising of the loyalists: the light infantry hung round the quarters of the enemy; and the main army slowly proceeded, in expectation of the promised reinforcements. When the army recrossed the Dan, the spirit of opposition to the British was as universal and ardent as could be wished. There was no deficiency in prospect but the want of arms. But the whole numbers of the militia then in motion, were

CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

Hillsborough,  
where he  
erects the  
royal stand-  
ard.

Feb'r. 20.

Greene re-  
crosses the  
Dan.Feb. 18-21.  
23.

CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

State of his  
army.

March 10.

not to be relied on. It appears from his own letters, that multitudes only visited and quitted him. On the 10th of May, he thus addressed the Governor of Virginia: "Every day has given me hopes of being stronger, but I have been as constantly disappointed. The militia, indeed, have flocked in from various quarters, and seemed to promise me as much as I could wish; but they soon get tired with difficulties, and go and come in such irregular bodies, that I can make no calculations on the strength of my army, nor direct any future operations that can ensure me the means of success. At this time, I have not above eight or nine hundred of them, 30 of whom are Carolinians, notwithstanding, there have been near 5,000 in motion, within the course of a few weeks. A force fluctuating in this manner, can only serve to destroy the wealth of our country, without promising the most distant hope of success, when opposed to an enemy regulated by discipline, and made formidable by the superiority of their numbers." And he adds: "Hitherto I have been obliged to practise that by finesse, which I dare not attempt by force. I know the people have been in anxious suspense, waiting the event of an action; but, let the consequence of censure be what it may, nothing shall hurry me into a measure that is not suggested by prudence, or connected with the interest of the department in which I have the honour to command.—General Caswell, with a considerable body of Carolina militia; and Colonel Campbell with the Virginia regulars, I expect will join the army tomorrow. When this force arrives, I am in hopes to dispose of my troops in such a manner as to be able to encumber the enemy with a number of wounded men."

He is reinforced.

Such was, at this time, the situation of General Greene; and such his determination. A few days greatly increased his numbers. General Lawson joined him with about five hundred Virginia militia: Butler and Eaton brought to his aid what bodies of North-Carolina militia they had been able to collect. From Montgomery, Colonel Preston came with three hundred intrepid mountaineers: Colonel Campbell was disappointed in his patriotic exertions to raise a large corps of riflemen; he could procure sixty only; but their hearts were stout, and their fire unerring. Colonel Lynch appeared with three hundred men from Bedford. These and other reinforcements, as they furnished Greene with some of the data of victory, inspired him with confidence; and every thing indicated the approach of a general action.

Lee and Pickens had closely followed Tarleton over the Haw. While meditating the surprize of his corps, a singular incident threw another vietim in their way. Colonel Pyle, a zealous loyalist, had collected about four hun-



CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

Lee strikes  
Pyle's Royal  
militia.

Feb'r. 25.

dred disaffected militia, and wished to place them under Tarleton's auspices. For this purpose, he had dispatched two young men to find out the encampment of the British legion. These messengers fell in with Lieutenant Colonel Lee and his dragoons. Mistaking the American for the British partizan, they respectfully communicated the object of their errand; and the rencounter was so managed by Lee, as to place in his power the whole assemblage of loyalists, and with them their obnoxious leader. To disarm or disperse them, was, at first, the only measure intended; but the advance of the militia under Pickens having produced a partial discovery, and drawn the fire of some among the loyalists, a conflict ensued, in which ninety of the disaffected were killed—and many were severely wounded. Pyle himself was left for dead on the field, but afterwards recovered. Lee has been wrongly charged with inhumanity on this occasion: \* the conflict was begun by the royal militia; and the American cavalry, had a hot pursuit been ordered, might have annihilated the whole body of the routed and fleeing loyalists. This occurrence prevented Lee from striking Tarleton; but it broke in that quarter, at least, the rising spirit of disaffection. Cornwallis apprized of Tarleton's danger, and unwilling again to trust his rash impetuosity, recalled him to Hillsborough by three successive messengers. He had, in this expedition, been from fancied security, unusually incautious, and more than once perfectly assailable.

Before the time stated in his proclamation, Cornwallis left Hillsborough, crossed the Haw, and encamped on Allemance creek. Want of provisions was the imperious motive for this retrograde movement. Greene also crossing the Haw towards its source, took a position between Troublesome creek and Reedy-Fork. The light corps under Williams was again interposed between the main army and the foe; and again it proved eminently serviceable—confining the British within narrow limits—intercepting their scouts and foragers—and striking terror into the loyalists by distant and unexpected excursions. To free himself from these troublesome and galling neighbours, Cornwallis, on the 6th of March, advanced towards Reedy-Fork. This movement produced a sharp skirmish at Wetzell's mill, between the riflemen of the American light corps, and the British troops under Lieutenant Colonel Webster. Greene, yet inferior in numbers, was unwilling to hazard a general action: accordingly, he often changed his position. At this time, instead of marching to the assistance of Williams, he retreated over the Haw to the Iron Works on Troublesome creek.—Cornwallis then returned towards

\* Lee has fully repelled this charge. See Lee's Memoirs, Vol. I. P. 309.

CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

Battle of  
Guilford  
Court-  
house.

March 15.

Guilford Court house, and finally encamped near the Quaker's meeting house in the forks of Deep river. In this interval, General Greene, reinforced by the accessions of troops already mentioned, put his army in motion, and approached within eight miles of the British camp. His intention was to offer battle to the enemy, on ground selected by himself. He wished to employ without delay the militia that had just joined him, well knowing the precarious nature of their services ; he was also sensible that success on the side of the Americans must utterly ruin the foe, whereas if victory declared for the British, it would only prove a partial evil to the country. The baggage had been deposited at the Iron Works, a place of security, ten miles in the rear, to which, in the event of a defeat, the troops were directed to rendezvous. Stationed on ground judiciously chosen, Greene was apprehensive, lest the enemy should not attack him. Cornwallis however, sought battle with correspondent eagerness. Having previously sent his waggon and baggage to Belle's mills on Deep river, under a strong escort, the British General put his army in motion about day-break, on the 15th. either to meet the Americans in the way, or to attack them in their encampment. Of this movement, Greene was early apprized, and accordingly prepared for battle. The whole of his army, rank and file, amounted to 4 thousand 2 hundred and sixty-one. The cavalry included in this number, did not exceed 188—the Continental infantry consisted of 1490 ; the residue was militia. The greater part of the circumjacent country was a wilderness, with a few cleared fields interspersed here and there. Greene drew up his army on a large woody eminence, surrounded by other eminences, mostly covered with timber and thick under brush. Three lines were formed : the front line consisting of the North Carolina militia, under Eaton and Butler ; the second line of Virginia militia, commanded by Stevens and Lawson ; the 3d line of the Virginia and Maryland Continentals, under Huger and Williams. On the right flank, Lieutenant Colonel Washington was posted with his dragoons, a detachment of light infantry, and a regiment of riflemen commanded by Colonel Lynch ; while the left flank was covered by Lieutenant Colonel Lee with his legion, a party of light infantry, and a corps of riflemen, under Colonel Campbell.—The first line, supported by two field-pieces, occupied the skirts of the woods ; a fence ran parallel with their front ; and before it was an open field. About 300 yards in the rear, stood the second line, in the midst of the woods ; and, at the same distance behind, where the eminence drew to a point, the Continentals presented a double front. Very early in the morning, the advance of the British army fell in with Lee's corps. Tarleton was compelled to retire with some loss ; and in an attempt to separate



him from the main army, the American cavalry was charged, at the Quaker's meeting-house, by the British guards who had just reached it. The legion infantry and the riflemen under Campbell, immediately coming up, poured on the guards a quick and well directed fire. As Cornwallis was close in the rear of his advance, a retreat was deemed expedient: it was effected in perfect order by the light infantry and the riflemen, under the protection of the cavalry. In the first of these skirmishes, Tarleton was wounded, some of his dragoons killed and some taken; not a single American soldier or horse was injured; in the second, both sides suffered; the British more than the Americans.—As soon as the enemy's van appeared on the great Salisbury road, the action commenced by a cannonade which continued for about 20 minutes. Cornwallis then formed his army into three columns for the attack. The right consisted of a British and a German regiment, led on by Leslie, and supported by a battalion of the guards: the left of two British regiments commanded by Webster, and supported by the grenadiers, and another battalion of the guards, under O'Hara. In the center was the artillery, with the light infantry of the guards and the Yogers. Tarleton, with his cavalry, formed a corps of observation in the rear. With the steady and deliberate step of veterans, the British moved onward. Notwithstanding the advantages of their position, the North Carolina militia soon relinquished their ground.—Some fired once when the enemy came within long shot; some gave a second fire; but many did not even discharge their loaded muskets. Their flight was as rapid as it was ignominious. No intreaty, no threat of the Generals and field officers, could induce them to face the enemy. A few only of Eaton's brigade, scorning a disgraceful safety, maintained their ground with the riflemen under Campbell and Lee's legion. This compelled Leslie to bring his support into action—the regiment of Germans and the guards, he left to manage this part of the contest, and himself advanced with the residue of his command, against the 2d American line, already engaged with Webster. The militia under Stevens and Lawson, uninfluenced by the shameful panic of the front line, made a noble stand. The brave Stevens, overjoyed at this opportunity of effacing the disgrace of Camden, animated his men by his words, but still more by his example: resolved to make even the timid perform their duty, he had posted at a proper distance in his rear, several riflemen, with peremptory orders, to shoot any of his militia that should attempt to escape before a retreat was ordered. Lieutenant Colonel Washington brought Lynch's riflemen against Webster's flank; but O'Hara came up, and forced them to give way. The British then uniting their efforts against Lawson and Stevens, and charging their militia with fixed bayonets,



CHAP.  
XVIII.

1781

drove back the second line, after an obstinate conflict. Stevens had received a ball through his thigh; and this circumstance, no doubt, accelerated the retreat of his brigade. But here at least, he enjoyed the soothing reflection that his men had displayed an honourable firmness, and considerably contributed to maim a proud enemy.

The 3rd line still remained; and it was composed of the elite of the Southern army. On its exertions, therefore, Greene rested his hopes of ultimate victory. Webster advanced against the right of the Continentals, consisting of the first regiment of Maryland, supported by Hawe's regiment of Virginia, and Kirkwood's company of Delawares. Meeting with a stern reception, he quickly drew back. The British guards were brought to his support; and the renewed attack was now directed against the second Maryland regiment, stationed on the left of the first, and strengthened by two six pounders. Struck with unaccountable alarm, this regiment precipitately gave way, and abandoned to the assailants the two field pieces. The first Maryland regiment, and Washington's corps, now turned upon Webster. The contest was fierce and bloody: the artillery was recovered; and Lord Cornwallis himself was accidentally saved from becoming Washington's prisoner. To stop the ardent pursuit of the Americans, the fire of the British artillery was poured on friends as well as foes. In the mean time Hawe's regiment and Kirkwood's company were warmly engaged with part of Webster's command; nor had the contest ceased between the German regiment and Lee's infantry, supported by Campbell's riflemen. This portion of the American army, after manfully supporting a sharp and separate conflict, retreated in good order to Guilford Court-house, where it joined the General.

Greene retreats to the Reedy-Fork and thence to the Iron Works.

Greene was desirous, even at the price of a partial defeat, to cripple his adversary's army, but he was unwilling to hazard the annihilation of troops on which the fate of the South depended. When, therefore, he perceived the ignominious flight of the first line, and of the second Maryland regiment; the enemy encircling his Continentals; and Lee's corps exposed to utter destruction, he thought it advisable to order a retreat. This was effected in admirable order. Behind Reedy-Fork, the American General halted to collect his stragglers, after which he leisurely retired to the Iron-works, on Troublesome Creek. Cornwallis found himself unable to urge a pursuit.

British historians have justly bestowed a fervid tribute of praise on their gallant troops for the perseverance and intrepidity which they displayed in the battle near Guilford Court-house.—If we consider the eventual nullity of the North-Carolina militia, and of the 2d Maryland regiment; the ill effects which their shameful conduct was

1781

calculated to produce; the superiority of British discipline, and British weapons, we will find much applause likewise due to that part of the American army, which so obstinately maintained the arduous and bloody contest. The selection of the ground, the arrangement of the troops, belonged to the General. To the men must be attributed that severity of resistance which induced Mr. Fox emphatically to declare in the British Parliament that "such another victory would destroy the British army." Cornwallis found himself compelled by the diminution of his force\* not to venture upon a new conflict. He could not even preserve the ground which he had gained. In a few days, was exhibited the singular spectacle of a victor in distress—retiring precipitately from the theatre of his triumph, before his vanquished enemy, in high spirits, and closely pressing on his rear. For the double purpose of security and subsistence, Ld. Cornwallis resolved to march to Cross-Creek, a settlement where he entertained hopes of meeting with abundance and support. Before he put his troops in motion, he proclaimed his late victory—calling on all loyal subjects for immediate aid in restoring order and regular government—and liberally promising pardons within a certain date.—Such of his wounded as could not be moved, he consigned to the humanity of General Greene; and proceeded towards the friendly settlement at Cross-Creek by slow and easy marches. Greene followed him as far as Ramsay's mills on Deep river; unfavourable circumstances delayed his advance, and prevented the attack, which he certainly contemplated on the crippled and retreating foe.—Passing Deep river on a bridge hastily erected for that purpose, the British General marched to Cross-Creek, where his expectations of comfort, repose, and succour were sorely disappointed.—To Wilmington, therefore, he now turned his eyes and directed his march—Major Craig had collected there plentiful supplies of every description—Cornwallis reached that place on the 7th of April, and his troops were, at length, permitted to enjoy a short intermission of their long and fruitless toils.

Cornwallis retires to Cross-Creek, and thence to Wilmington.

\* Probable account of the British army engaged, 2,000—with the baggage 400.

British—532 killed and wounded. Colonel Stuart—Colonel O'Hara, Col. Webster—Capt. Maynard, and many other officers killed or mortally wounded.

The subsequent measures of Cornwallis, proved this calculation to be rather under than over his real loss.

Americans—Continental—326 killed, wounded and missing.

Major Anderson, & Capt. Barrett (of Washington's cavalry) killed, &c. Gen. Huger and Capt. Fauntleroy wounded.

*Militia.*

Killed—4 Captains—17 privates.—Wounded—Gen. Stevens—1 Major—3 Captains—8 Subalterns—60 privates. The Americans lost 4 field-pieces.



CHAP.  
XVIII.

---

1781

Greene follows him as far as Ramsay's mills,

Then marches in to S. Carolina.

The American army had halted at Ramsay's mills. That place offered no advantage similar to those which the British troops now possessed. In a country naturally barren, and at this time almost exhausted, provisions were scanty—and no supplies of clothing could be procured, yet not a murmur was heard among the troops. They had been so long inured to deprivations and hardship, that the very ideas of ease and comfort seemed banished from their minds. The example of their beloved General, who cheerfully participated in all their sufferings, made patience an honour, as well as a duty.

At Ramsay's mills, it was necessary that General Greene should determine on a plan of future operations; and the basis of that plan must evidently be to effect, with the existing means, as much good as possible in the Southern department. After that full, deliberate and mature investigation, which the momentous subject invited, Greene resolved immediately to carry the war into South Carolina. The measure, he conceived, would release both North Carolina and Virginia—maintain in South Carolina the strong spirit of opposition—and wrest from the British post after post—even, with the aid of famine, Charleston itself.—Georgia was not forgotten in this plan; but its recovery was a more distant object; and would necessarily follow that of the Carolinas. Greene scarcely entertained a doubt of drawing Lord Cornwallis to Camden by this movement. His principal anxiety was to strike Rawdon, before he should be reinforced. A possibility existed that the British General should march into Virginia. In this case, Greene's immediate views would be facilitated; and it was probable that in these protracted and unprofitable toils, Cornwallis would waste his strength to such a degree, as ultimately to present him an almost defenceless victim to the Southern army. There was danger of British injury, but not of British conquest. The conflict was stubborn and hopeless to Britain. To judge of the future by the past, if Cornwallis marched into Virginia, he would conquer only the successive encampments of his troops, and retain none but his last post, if even that. In Virginia, the public mind was almost undivided—The alienated affections of the people could not be recovered by violence and terror. A war against opinions and feelings, was not to be terminated like other wars, by victories obtained in the field: all America was a vast camp: all her citizens were soldiers. Nothing was to be apprehended but a sudden and radical change in opinion; and such a change was not probable. In the places occupied by the foe, timidity might assume the language of loyalty: but action would not confirm it. Republicanism preserving a stern silence, or boldly avowing unconquerable hostility, would ever be ready to act. So long as the banners of the country should



wave in the invaded State, there would be patriots enough to join them ; whereas the pompous proclamations of the British General, his profuse offers of pardons, his appeals to the fears of some, and to the prejudices of others, would be, as they had hitherto been, impotent and unavailing.

Under these and other influential impressions, Greene ordered Lee with his legion, and Captain Oldham's detachment of Maryland Continentals, to precede the main army and join Marion, to whom he communicated his plan, accompanied with correspondent instructions. To Sumpter and Pickens, the General likewise imparted his design. The first was desired to join the army on its approach to Camden, and the second to invest Ninety Six, so as to leave Rawdon unassisted from that quarter. Lee, in obedience to his orders, took his departure on the 6th of April, inclining towards Cross Creek, in order to deceive Cornwallis as to the real object of the march. The next day, the whole army moved towards Camden.

The intelligence of this bold measure, which he received after Greene had already made some progress, gave Cornwallis considerable anxiety. He feared for Rawdon ; and was alarmed for himself, should he march into South Carolina, and find Greene successful, and reinforced by a numerous militia, able and eager to intercept his route, cut off his subsistence, and render useless the discipline and valour of his troops.—with a retrograde motion, apparent disgrace was connected : Cornwallis, therefore, ultimately resolved to march from Wilmington into Virginia, and join, at Petersburg, the British force already in that State. This advance, he thought, would draw General Greene back to the Northward ; or perhaps, be attended with still more important effects. On the 25th of April, the British army left the vicinity of Cape Fear, and moved towards Halifax. Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, and Colonel Hamilton, of North-Carolina, with their respective corps, preceded the main body. The British legion broke into occasional enormities which even the well timed severity of Lord Cornwallis could scarcely restrain. The British General, instructed by the stern lessons of experience, saw the necessity of restraining his troops to the moderation of civilized war, but the legion, demoralized by habitual licentiousness and barbarity, mocked discipline and power. In his march Cornwallis met with no opposition sufficient even to retard its celerity : the Fords on the intervening rivers, were secured by the advanced corps under Tarleton and Hamilton, and by Simcoe, whom Arnold had detached for that purpose, with the Queen's rangers. On the 20th of May, Cornwallis entered Petersburg.

Cornwallis  
advances in-  
to Virginia.

April 25.

## CHAPTER XIX.

---

*Proceedings of the General Assembly—The Legislature meet again, and adjourn to Charlottesville—Cornwallis crosses James river, in quest of La Fayette—Distressing situation of Virginia—La Fayette retreats from Richmond—And is pursued by Cornwallis—Who suddenly halts and alters his plan—Simcoe is detached to the Point of Fork—And Tarleton to Charlottesville—Critical situation of Baron Steuben—His retreat—Tarleton's proceedings—He attempts to seize Mr. Jefferson—Excesses committed by the British troops—La Fayette is joined by Wayne—Tarleton attempts to destroy the stores at Albemarle Old-Court-House—His attempt is baffled by the Marquis—Cornwallis retreats to the lower country—Is pursued by La Fayette—Enters Richmond—Moves towards Williamsburg—Partial engagement between Butler and Simcoe—Cornwallis prepares to cross James river—La Fayette resolves on attacking him—Affair near Jamestown—Cornwallis passes to the South side of James river—Tarleton is detached to Bedford—York-Town and Gloucesterpoint are occupied by Cornwallis—La Fayette encamps in the neighbourhood—Situation of the Northern army—Pecuniary aid granted by France—Cessation of paper-money—Robert Morris is appointed superintendent of the finances—Plan of an attack upon New York—This plan is relinquished for offensive operations against Cornwallis—Incursion of Arnold into Connecticut—Advance of the combined armies to Virginia—Sir Samuel Hood arrives on the American coast—Count De Grasse reaches the Chesapeake—Naval engagement between De Grasse and Graves—The French squadron from Rhode Island enters the Chesapeake—Movements of the combined army—Critical situation of Lord Cornwallis—The Allies advance against York—Skirmish between the British legion and the French cavalry—The Americans take two of the enemy's redoubts—Cornwallis attempts to escape on the side of Gloucester—But cannot succeed—And is compelled to surrender with his whole army—Importance of this event—Part of the American army returns to the North—Rochambeau encamps in Virginia—De Grasse sails for the West Indies—And La Fayette returns to Europe.*

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

Proceed-  
ings of the  
General As-  
sembly.

March.

The General Assembly had separated on the second of January, at the approach of the parricide Arnold. The critical situation of the country again called together the fathers of the State, on the 1st of March. The House of Delegates elected R. H. Lee their Speaker. The session was short, and almost exclusively devoted to the exigencies of the moment. Legislative provision was made for raising two legions, each of which should consist of six companies of infantry, and one troop of horse. The rules of Continental service and all the articles of war, were extended to the militia, and martial law established within 20 miles of the American and the hostile camp. The recruiting service was invigorated by further encouragements.—The Governor was empowered to call into the field such numbers of militia as circumstances might require; to impress provisions, horses, cloathing, accoutrements, boats, vessels, waggons, and negroes to serve as pioneers; to apprehend disaffected persons; to send non-jurors into the enemy's lines; and to punish opposition to military laws, with the loss of all civil rights. For the speedy trial of certain offenders, the establishment of commissions of Oyer and Terminer, was directed; and the Executive were authorised to discontinue, if necessary, State Quarter Masters and Commissaries, and to place the resources of the Commonwealth in the hands of Continental staff-officers. The certificates given to citizens for impressed property were made receivable in lieu of specifics to be contributed, according to law, by those citizens. The resource of paper emissions were again recurred to, because no other method of providing for the exigencies of the times could be devised; the Treasurer was consequently directed to emit 120,000,000, and the Governor authorised to issue 15,000,000 more, in bills to be redeemed in 1792, by means of an assessment on property. The depreciation had nearly reached its acme, and we will see the paper currency expire in the course of the present year.\*

Among the efforts made by Congress to give efficacy to the Continental government, was a resolution recommending it to the respective States to vest in the federal Council, a power to levy for the use of the Union, a duty of 5 per cent *ad valorem* on imports and prize goods. This, it was presumed, would constitute a permanent, productive and vivifying fund. Devotedness to the general good had lately induced Virginia to sacrifice her western possessions; she now with equal liberality, acceded to the wishes of

---

\* The varying increase of the depreciation had induced the Assembly to allow a certain quantity of tobacco to each public officer, in lieu of a salary in paper money. At this time, (March) the depreciation was about 90 for 1. It increased to 1000 for 1, when the paper currency died away.



**CHAP. XIX.** Congress in respect to the contemplated duty, excepting from its operation arms, ammunition, cloathing and other articles connected with the support of the war, and imported for the United States, or any of them. To this beneficial and salutary plan, however, the concurrent assent of all the States could not be obtained.

1781

May.

The Legislature meet again, and adjourn to Charlottesville.

Cornwallis crosses James River, in quest of La Fayette.

Distressing situation of Virginia.

After these Legislative provisions, the session terminated. The Assembly met again at Richmond on the 7th day of May; but the movements of Phillips and Cornwallis, evidently threatening the Metropolis, the members present on the 10th, adjourned the house until the 21st, then to meet at Charlottesville. Letters were accordingly dispatched to the absent members, requiring their punctual attendance at that time and place.

Very few days elapsed between the arrival of Lord Cornwallis at Petersburg, and the commencement of his offensive operations. He crossed James river at Westover, employing nearly three days in the transportation of his army across that wide stream. Three regiments under Leslie had just arrived from New York. One of these joined Cornwallis; the residue of the reinforcement was ordered to Portsmouth, and the defence of that post entrusted to Leslie. Arnold, weary of hair-breadth escapes, and probably conscious of the jealousy and disgust with which he was viewed by the proud victors of Camden and Guilford, returned to New York. The devastation of his native State was reserved for the infuriated traitor—but the smiles of royalty\* could restore neither serenity to his breast, nor splendor to his fame.

Cornwallis exulted in the superiority of his numbers over those of La Fayette. Flushed with hopes of a brilliant campaign, and confident of his meditated victim, he wrote to England “the boy cannot escape me.” Here we will again introduce one of those letters which bring the reader into contact with time and circumstances, and better than regular narrative, exhibit the shape, substance and complexion of affairs. “I have just been advised, the Governor of Virginia writes to the commander in Chief, on the 28th of May, that the British have evacuated Petersburg, been joined by a considerable reinforcement from New York, and crossed James river at Westover. They were, on the 26th instant, three miles advanced towards Richmond, at which place Major General, the Marquis Fayette, lay with 3000 men, regulars and militia; that being the whole number we could arm, until the arrival of the 1100 stand of arms from Rhode Island, which are about this time at the place where our public stores are

---

\* The King of England desired his special approbation to be notified to B. General Arnold, for his bravery, skill &c. in the great Tobacco War &c. (See Remembrancer for 1781.)

deposited. The whole force of the enemy within this State, from the best intelligence I have been able to get, is, I think, about 7000 men, including the garrison left at Portsmouth. A number of privateers, which are constantly ravaging the shores of our rivers, prevent us from receiving any aid from the counties lying on navigable waters; and powerful operations meditated against our western frontier, by a joint force of British and Indian savages, have, as your Excellency before knew, obliged us to embody between two and three thousand men, in that quarter. Your Excellency will judge from this state of things, and from what you know of your own country, what it may probably suffer during the present campaign. Should the enemy be able to produce no opportunity of annihilating the Marquis's army, a small proportion of their force may yet restrain his movements effectually, while the greater part is employed in detachments to waste an unarmed country, and lead the minds of the people to acquiesce under those events which they see no human power prepared to ward off. We are too far removed from the other scenes of war, to say whether the main force of the enemy be within this State; But I suppose they cannot any where spare so great an army for the operations of the field. Were it possible for this circumstance to justify in your Excellency, a determination to lend us your personal aid, it is evident from the universal voice, that the presence of their beloved countryman, whose talents have so long been successfully employed in establishing the freedom of kindred States, to whose person they have still flattered themselves they retained some right, and have ever looked upon as their *dernier resort* in distress; that your appearance, among them I say, would restore full confidence of salvation, and would render them equal to whatever is not impossible. I cannot undertake to foresee and obviate the difficulties which lie in the way of such a resolution. The whole subject is before you, of which I see only detached parts --and your judgment will be formed on a view of the whole. Should the danger of the State and its consequence to the Union, be such as to render it best for the whole, that you should repair to its assistance, the difficulty would then be how to keep men out of the field. I have undertaken to hint this matter to your Excellency, not only on my own sense of its importance to us, but at the solicitation of many members of weight in our Legislature, which has not yet assembled\* to speak their

---

\* This letter is dated *Charlottesville, May 28*. The Legislature had, as we have seen, adjourned from Richmond to Charlottesville on the 24th of May. No sufficient number attended to elect a Speaker until the 28th—the day when Mr. Jefferson wrote this. Mr. Jefferson's term of office expired on the last of May.

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

own desires. A few days will bring to me that relief, which the constitution has prepared for those oppressed with the labours of my office ; and a long declared resolution of relinquishing it to abler hands. has prepared my way for retirement to a private station ; still, as an individual, I should feel the comfortable effects of your presence, and have (what I thought could not have been) an additional motive for that gratitude, esteem and respect which I have long felt for your Excellency."

On the same day, Governor Jefferson addressed the President of Congress ; his letter briefly stated the situation of Virginia, and concluded in these words : " These facts, and those with which I have heretofore been constrained to trouble your Excellency, will enable Congress to form a proper judgment of the situation of this State, and to adopt such measures for its aid as its circumstances may require, and their powers effect."

The Commander in Chief, regarding all America as his country, and employed in preparations for an attack upon New-York, which, he thought, would determine the contest, or, at least, compel Sir Henry Clinton to recall the detachments now overspreading the South, could not acquiesce in the wishes of his native State ; but his eyes were incessantly turned towards it : and we will soon see him concerting and executing, for its salvation, a most happy and decisive plan.

La Fayette well understood his situation. Fervid as his temper was, and though he personally disregarded danger, his judgment taught him that he must act for the people, whose cause he had espoused, and not for himself. To reserve his small, but brave army for future service, and, in the mean time, to protect the stores on which the ultimate success of the struggle, in a great measure, depended, were the objects which prudence immediately and forcibly suggested. To these objects he ought to confine himself, until the arrival of Wayne, and the proper organization of the militia. Of this he was duly sensible, and he acted accordingly. Retiring from his position below Richmond, he crossed the Chickahominy, and advanced towards Fredericksburg. This movement brought him nearer to the expected reinforcement under Wayne, and, at the same time covered the valuable manufactory of arms in the vicinity of Falmouth. Loud and pressing was the cry of La Fayette for aid of every sort ; the Assembly, the Governor, Steuben, Nelson, and other patriotic officers, and the people themselves, were all eager to unite their efforts against the common enemy ; but the nature of the country, and the existing state of things, did not permit that rapidity and intensity of action which the moment required. Lieutenant Colonel John Mercer, who had, from the first year of the war till the battle of Monmouth, served with dis-

La Fayette  
retreats  
from Rich-  
mond,



tion and applause in the Northern army, and afterwards joined Lawson's legionary corps during Leslie's invasion, now re-appeared in the field. Himself glowing with ardor for the service of his country, he kindled in the youths of his neighbourhood a correspondent feeling, and with a troop of Dragoons, mounted and equipped at their own expense, joined the gallant La Fayette, to whom nothing could be more welcome than such a corps, especially for the purpose of observation. Cornwallis was close in his rear. Just before the accession of Colonel Mercer, he had, on the Northern side of the Pamunkey, been overtaken by a detachment of the British light troops under Tarleton. As he advanced through the country, Cornwallis siezed on all the valuable horses within his reach, and was thus enabled not only to remount his cavalry, but to increase their numbers. The movements of Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton became from this circumstance more rapid and more formidable than ever. Led by the appearance of his dragoons to suppose the main body of the pursuing army ready to attack him, La Fayette, with unshaken resolution, though with presentiments necessarily of a gloomy nature, drew up his little army in order of battle. The arrival of Colonel Mercer soon enabled him to ascertain that the party in whose near approach this alarm had originated, was only a large patrol of Tarleton's horse, and that Cornwallis himself was still sufficiently distant to be successfully eluded. Not a moment was lost. Imparting to his movements additional vigor and celerity, and relinquishing for higher objects his original plan of assuming some strong position whence he might cover Fredericksburg and the manufactory of arms in the neighbourhood of that place, he rapidly advanced through the Western parts of Spotsylvania county, across the head waters of the Mattaponi, towards the point where he had strong reasons to hope that a junction with the Pennsylvania line might be speedily and safely effected. For some time, Cornwallis, eager to redeem the pledge which he had so confidently given of not suffering "the boy" to escape, continued, but continued in vain, his menacing pursuit. Every hour increased the distance between his adversary and himself: he therefore, turned his attention to other objects, which he probably considered as equally conducive to the final triumph of the British arms. These objects were to harass the people of the State; to terrify them into submission by practically bringing to their view his power and his determination to injure, and their own vulnerable, defenceless condition; to destroy those resources which had hitherto eluded the wide spreading fury of invading armies; in short, to detach Virginians from their new system of government and their new rulers, by exhibiting both as deplorably inadequate to the important pur-

And is pursued by Cornwallis,

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

Who suddenly halts  
and alters  
his plan.

poses of military resistance and national protection. Perhaps, too, he entertained a proud hope of annihilating, at no distant day, by a single blow, skillfully aimed and successfully inflicted, the united forces of Wayne and La Fayette—a hope further encouraged by the well known temper of the Pennsylvania line and their adventurous commander. With such views and such a hope, Cornwallis encamped on the North Anna in the county of Hanover. Some time before this halt, while Tarleton was closely pursuing his adversary, one of his exploring parties, we are informed by himself,\* intercepted a Courier, conveying letters from the Marquis to General Greene, Baron Steuben and Governor Jefferson. In the despatch addressed to the latter, La Fayette compared the present success of the British arms in Virginia, with the invasion of the Electorate of Hanover by the French in the preceding war, and he prophetically announced a similar result, if the people would only make those exertions which their cause deserved, and their situation required.

In the mean time Lord Cornwallis, bent on the execution of the predatory plan which he had lately formed, made two considerable detachments from his army. One of these, amounting to 500 men, partly of the Queen's rangers, infantry and cavalry, and partly of the Yagers, he placed under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Simcoe, a partizan, whose indefatigable activity and singular fitness for stratagem, surprize and intrigue, we have already had occasion to mention.

Simcoe is  
detached to  
the Point of  
Fork.

At the confluence of the two branches of the James, in the county of Fluvanna, is a point of land, known under the appellation of the Point of Fork, where, during the late incursions of Phillips and Arnold, a State arsenal had been formed, and military stores collected, especially with a view to the prosecution of the war in the Carolinas. The protection of this important post had been entrusted to Baron Steuben, who, in this critical posture of affairs in Virginia, had, by the joint orders of La Fayette and Greene, repaired there from the borders of North Carolina, with about 600 new levies, originally destined for the Southern army! To the Point of Fork, the militia under General Lawson, amounting nearly to the same number, had also been directed to march. The plan of La Fayette was, at first, to unite the whole with the Pennsylvania line and the body under his immediate command, and make a combined effort against the enemy. The orders which he issued to bring this scheme into effect, unfortunately were intercepted. Cornwallis altered his movements; and this change, together with unexpected delays in the meditated

\* See Tarleton's Narrative.

junction with the Pennsylvania line, overthrew the project.

It was against Baron Steuben, and the magazines under his protection, that Lieutenant Colonel Simcoe now directed his efforts. His instructions were, suddenly to fall on the Baron, annihilate his force, or, at least, to drive the whole beyond the Southern branch of James river, and to destroy the arms and provisions known to have been collected at the Point of Fork.

The expedition of Tarleton, who was detached with 180 cavalry of the legion, and 70 mounted infantry of the 23d regiment, headed by Captain Champagne, embraced the following objects. He received orders to surprise, take or disperse the members of the General Assembly, then convened at Charlottesville as we have before mentioned, to seize on the person of the Governor, who resided in the neighborhood, to spread on his route devastation and terror, sparing no military stores or other resources likely to enable the Americans to prolong the existing struggle, and perhaps, to end it with success. He was ultimately to join Simcoe, and assist his intended operations.

With their accustomed eagerness and activity, the two indefatigable and dreaded partisans entered upon the execution of their respective tasks.

This double movement rendered Steuben's situation unusually perilous. The extreme difficulty of obtaining prompt and correct information respecting the British and their schemes, the severe precautions which Simcoe took for securing every person met or seen on his route, effectually concealed his march from the Baron. The latter, however, became apprized of Tarleton's rapid advance. Imagining himself the immediate object of it, he lost no time in transporting his stores to the South side of the Fluvanna, intending himself speedily to follow, with the whole division under his command. When Simcoe reached the Point of Fork, the American stores had been removed, and Steuben's detachment crossed the river, except about 30 men, then awaiting the return of the boats, to embark and join their friends. These men unavoidably fell into the hands of the British cavalry. The river was deep and unfordable; and all the boats had been secured on the South side of it. Simcoe's main object was, therefore, frustrated. Under the mortification arising from this disappointment, a singular stratagem occurred to his wily mind. It was to impress the Baron with the belief that the troops now at the Point of Fork were the advance of the British army, ready to overwhelm him; and thus to work upon his fears so far as to induce him to sacrifice most of the stores which had been transported over the Fluvanna. For this purpose he encamped on the heights opposite to Steuben's new station, advantageously displaying

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

And Tarleton to Charlottesville.

June 3.

Critical situation of Baron Steuben.



CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

His retreat.

his force, and by the number of his fires suggesting a probability of the main body, headed by Cornwallis, having actually reached the neighborhood. The Baron, who had been informed that the corps under Tarleton threatened his left, now fancied himself in imminent danger. Retreating precipitately during the night, he marched near 30 miles from the Point of Fork, abandoning to the enemy such stores as could not be removed. In the morning, Simcoe observing the success of his stratagem, and wishing to give it still further effect, procured some small canoes, and sent across the river Captain Stephenson, with a detachment of light infantry, and Cornet Wolsey with four hussars. The former was directed to destroy the stores and arms which the Baron had left behind in the hurry and confusion of his premature retreat; and the latter, to mount his hussars, who had carried their saddles over with them, on such straggling horses as he was likely to find, to patrol some miles on the route taken by Steuben; in short, to exhibit every appearance of eager and formidable pursuit. Both these orders were successfully executed. Stephenson performed without delay or annoyance, the task of destruction assigned to him; and Wolsey so confirmed the belief of Steuben, that the whole British army was close in his rear, that he accelerated his march, retiring still further from the river. His object was to resume his original destination and join General Greene; but he received fresh orders not to leave the State, so long as Cornwallis should continue there. On the militia under Lawson, a similar injunction was laid. British historians have greatly exaggerated the loss sustained by the Americans at the Point of Fork. Of their thrasonic accounts, undoubted evidence is in the hands of the author of this narrative.\*

Tarleton's  
proceedings

June 4.

Let us now trace the rapid advance of Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton to Charlottesville. Immediately upon his being detached by Lord Cornwallis for the purposes already stated, he took the road to Louisa Courthouse. About the middle of the day he halted, and allowed his men and their horses a short interval of repose and some refreshment. By 11 o'clock at night, he reached the neighborhood of Louisa Court house, where he stopped only 3 hours, resuming his march at 2 in the morning. Moving onward with his usual celerity, he soon fell in with 12 waggons, laden with clothing for the Southern army, and proceeding towards the Carolinas, under an escort inade-

---

\* Tarleton has magnified almost every circumstance. The official correspondence of Lord Cornwallis himself, is full of exaggerations of this sort. Stedman is not more correct—The evidence to which we allude has been furnished by persons on or near the spot, at the time. Much to that effect is also contained in the archives of the State.

quate to their protection. These he took without difficulty and immediately burnt. Hearing that many distinguished characters who had fled from the lower country, were assembled, some at Dr. Walker's, some at Mr. John Walker's, whose houses lay almost contiguous to his route, he, for a moment lost sight of the principal object of his expedition, and resolved to make them prisoners. With this intention he divided his force—Captain Kinlock was, with part of it, detached to Mr. John Walker's house, while Tarleton himself proceeded with the rest to the Doctor's mansion. Here he captured Colonel John Simms, a member of the Senate of Virginia, and some other gentlemen, who passed from the arms of sleep, into the power of a vigilant enemy. Kinlock, equally active, was equally successful. Francis Kinlock, his relative and a Delegate to the American Congress from South Carolina, together with William and Robert Nelson, brothers to the General of that name, fell into his hands.

In the capture of those gentlemen, which was only a secondary and comparatively unimportant object, some time was unavoidably consumed. More was employed in refreshing both men and horses, in paroling part of the prisoners, and placing the rest under an escort. This delay greatly contributed to the failure of Tarleton's main purpose; but another circumstance assisted, at the same time, in rendering his incursion productive of inconsiderable effect, by giving a timely alarm to the members of the General Assembly at Charlottesville. A private gentleman, Mr. Jouitte, happened to be at the Cuckoo tavern in Louisa, when the detachment under Tarleton passed along the main road, on their way to Albemarle. It was natural enough for him to suspect the enemy's destination. Acquainted with every path and bye road in that part of the country, and mounted on a very fleet horse, he hastened to Charlottesville by a disused and shorter route, and made known the approach, of the British several hours before their arrival. In vain Tarleton flattered himself that, as he advanced upwards of seventy miles in twenty four hours, his excursion would be crowned with complete success. Elate with this hope, he pressed onward, detaching, when he reached the vicinity of Charlottesville, a troop of horse under Captain M'Cleod to Monticello, the well known seat of Mr. Jefferson. Tarleton himself, followed by the main body, passed the Rivanna, which flows about a mile East of the town. In his own narrative of that transaction, he has posted a guard on the Western bank, which he, of course, overpowered and dispersed. We have been at the spot, and heard from many persons then in the neighborhood, and worthy of implicit belief, that Moore's ford, the place where he crossed, was not guarded at all. Warned by Jouitte of the impending danger, the Legislature hav-

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

ing previously resolved that, during the present hostile invasion, forty members should be a sufficient number to compose a house to proceed upon business, adjourned until the 7th of June, then to meet at Staunton, in the county of Augusta. From its situation on the Western side of the Blue-Ridge, that place was deemed perfectly unassailable. Most of the members hastening away, eluded the grasp, perhaps the sabre of the impetuous, merciless Tarleton. A few fell into his hands, as well as some officers and soldiers, whom a laudable desire to remove or otherwise to secure part of the public stores, rendered unmindful of personal safety. Tarleton has stated that, in this affair, some Americans were killed. This is incorrect. There was no effusion of blood, except in the case of Mr. Archer, who was unnecessarily, wantonly, and cruelly wounded by a British Sergeant, of Captain Stovington's troop, named David Ray. The mention of the capture of Brigadier General Scott is equally unfounded. He was not at Charlottesville. Jouitte, who had so opportunely announced the approach of the British, was remarked by them, on account of the scarlet coat, and the military hat and plume which he usually wore. Mistaking him for an officer of high rank, they pursued him with eagerness and pertinacity; the fleetness of his horse soon placed him beyond their reach; but, in this pursuit, they missed another victim, whose death or captivity, would doubtless have been regarded by them as an ample compensation for the escape of the supposed General. The gallant Stevens, whose heroism we have had occasion to notice in so many places, but particularly in the hard and bloody engagement at Guilford Court-house, was then a member of the General Assembly. In the plain attire of a Virginia farmer, and mounted on a horse which chance had presented to him, and which but ill suited the present emergency, he had, on leaving Charlottesville, taken the same road as Jouitte. The British dragoons passed him unassailed, unhurt, and perhaps unobserved. A change of direction in his route screened him from further danger. Arms, ammunition and clothes, were either seized or destroyed by the British cavalry: yet not to that amount which their vaunting commander has stated.\* Much of the powder, and all the

---

\* Tarleton has indulged his usual *jactance* in stating the injury which he inflicted in the course of this expedition. That injury was, indeed, great—but it fell on private citizens more than on the State. The historian while writing this, has before his eyes a letter from Mr. John Walker, dated Belvoir, June 6, in which he gives an account of the public loss sustained both on the Rivanna and the Fluvanna. This account reduces things to their real dimensions—it is only from such sources that truth is derived. Connected with these losses, a lamentable and disgraceful circumstance has been recorded by La Fayette, in a letter, dated Brooks' Bridge, June 10, 1781, and addressed to the Speaker of the House of Delegates, then at Staunton, wherein he says:—"From the impossibility I had expe-



lead, escaped their search and their ravages—a fortunate circumstance, as, in the present crisis, those two articles had acquired an incalculable value! Some of the Saratoga prisoners, who, either by permission or by stealth, had remained in the neighbourhood after the removal of the troops of Convention to Fort Frederick in Maryland, are said to have joined Tarleton at Charlottesville. After remaining a few hours at that place, and perpetrating all the mischief in his power, the wary partizan retraced his steps to the Rivanna. It was then about one o'clock in the afternoon. For the purpose of resting and refreshing his corps, he halted near the Western bank of that river, at the farm-house of a Mr. Lewis, an active and meritorious officer of the militia who had been all the morning, and, indeed, was at that very moment, zealously employed in conveying public property beyond the reach of the invading foe. The scite of this spot was naturally delightful, and taste and culture had clothed it with additional beauty. Luxuriant fruit trees mingled their shades with those of native groves: and a pleasant lawn spread its verdure before the door of a simple, but neat and comfortable mansion. Through the whole ran a streamlet of limpid water; in short, as Tarleton himself remarked to Mrs. Lewis, upon entering the farm yard, “the place was a little paradise upon earth.” The scene was soon reversed. In his external behaviour and in his language, Tarleton displayed a soldier-like dignity; he appeared high minded, and even polite, but he secretly indulged his men in the exercise of every base and angry passion. On this occasion, private property suffered considerably from the habitual love of the British Dragoons for excess, plunder and destruction. Sheep, cows, and other domestic animals were unprofitably killed; cellars forcibly opened, clothes and portable articles of furniture secreted, and a valuable servant and several horses carried away. At this place, Tarleton prolonged his stay till the next morning. The most distinguished among his prisoners, he confined in a small room; the rest he consigned to a barn, where an insulting soldiery with apparent reluctance administered to them a scanty portion of nourishment. The inferior officers took possession of the beds, while the hardy and indefatigable Tarle-

---

rienced of getting shoes, I have been surprized to hear that a quantity of them has fallen into the enemy's hands. What hurts me the most, is the intelligence just brought by Dr. Pope that, after the fire had been put to two medicine waggons, they might have been saved, had not some inhabitants interfered to prevent it—part of these medicines has been afterwards picked up and sold by them”—On the 22d of the same month, the Marquis was requested by the Legislature, to make an enquiry respecting the stores destroyed at the Point of Fork—it appearing that not only the enemy but some of the adjacent inhabitants and others had been instrumental in the loss of said stores.—This was, no doubt, chargeable to the disaffection or cupidity of a few individuals only.

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

He at-  
tempts to  
seize Mr.  
Jefferson.

ten himself enjoyed a few hours of sleep on a common mattress, which he caused to be thrown across the floor. Another circumstance occurred, highly characteristic of his vigilance and activity. The sun had scarcely risen, when a loud report of musketry was heard in the adjacent woods, on the side of Monticello. Tarleton had just commenced a hasty military toilet; relinquishing the razor for the sabre, he immediately called his troop to arms, and the next moment saw him on his horse, and in full gallop towards the spot whence he imagined the obnoxious sound to have proceeded. No mountaineers, no riflemen collecting for an attack, could however, be discovered. The alarm had originated, it seems, in the distant firing of huntsmen, reverberated in louder notes by the echoes of the vast surrounding forests. A messenger from the detachment now at Monticello, further confirmed this idea, and dispelled the fears which Tarleton had been led by this firing to entertain for the safety of Captain M'Cleod.

The latter was unsuccessful in his attempt to seize on Mr. Jefferson, no longer to be considered as the Governor of the State, since his constitutional term of office had expired on the first of June. The intelligence received at Charlottesville of the approach of the British legion, was soon conveyed to Monticello, the two places being at a very small distance from each other. At this time, the speakers of the two houses, and some other members of Assembly, were Mr. Jefferson's guests. These hastened to Charlottesville, and after the adjournment of the Legislature to Staunton mentioned above, had scarcely sufficient time to effect their escape. M'Cleod and his detachment crossed at Secretary's Ford. They were already ascending the winding road that leads from that point to the summit of the hill called Monticello, on which stands Mr. Jefferson's house, when Lieutenant Hudson, who had fortunately descried their rapid advance, gave the family a further and last alarm. A carriage had already been provided, and in this Mrs. Jefferson and her children were safely conveyed to Colonel Carter's house, on the neighbouring mountain. Mr. Jefferson himself, directing his riding horse, which a blacksmith was then shoeing at a distant shop, to be, with all possible speed, led to a gate opening on the road to Colonel Carter's plantation, walked to that gate by a foot path which considerably shortened the route, and finding his injunctions obeyed, was enabled soon to rejoin his family.\* In less than ten minutes after his leaving the house, it was entered by M'Cleod, who notwithstanding the irritation which disappointment at missing his in-

---

\* The historian hopes that these details will be excused. The circumstance here related, has been so often misrepresented, that it was proper to reduce it to its real shape, and to give it its true colouring.

tended prey was calculated to produce, manifested a sacred and honorable regard for the usages of civilized warfare. Mr. Jefferson's property was respected, especially his books and papers. The waste committed in the cellars was attributable to the brutality of a few disorderly individuals attached to the party under M'Cleod, and it took place without his knowledge. So true it is that, in general, the conduct of soldiers depends on the principles, temper, and spirit of their officers, and that the human character is so ductile as to leave no excuse for the demoralization of armies !

Tarleton, rejoined by Macleod, recrossed the Rivanna, and proceeded towards the Point of Fork, in compliance with his instructions. Two circumstances hurried his retreat ; one was a report artfully and purposely spread, that clouds of mountaineers were hanging on his rear, and the militia of the adjacent counties indignantly and unanimously rising to intercept his return ; the other, a visibly increasing swell in the river, owing to the rain which had fallen during the preceding night. Further menaces of an impending attack reached the British partizan just below Milton ; upon which, he immediately retreated off the road to Colonel Randolph's plantation, where, having ordered his detachment to make ready for action, he remained one hour under arms. Seeing no enemy approach, he resumed his march, along the three-notched road, and joined Cornwallis and Simcoe in the neighborhood of the Point of Fork. His Lordship had encamped his army from the confluence of the two branches of the James, along the main river, to a plantation belonging to Mr. Jefferson, where he established his head quarters. Some idea of the mode of warfare used by the British in this expedition may be formed from the statement of a writer, whom the circumstances of his nativity, his principles, and his general character place above even the suspicion of an improper prejudice against England, and of illiberal and virulent deviations from facts. " For ten days, says Gordon, Lord Cornwallis continued at Elkhill, a seat of Mr. Jefferson's. The latter happily had time to remove most of his effects out of the house. His stocks of cattle, sheep, and hogs, together with what corn was wanted, were used for the sustenance of the army ; and all his horses, capable of service were carried off. This was no other than Mr. Jefferson expected. But the throats of the horses, too young for service, were cut ; his growing crops of corn and tobacco were burned, together with his barns, containing the same articles of the preceding year, and all the fences on the plantation, so as to leave it an absolute waste. These things were perpetrated under Lord Cornwallis's eye ; the situation of the house in which he was, commanding a view of every part of the plantation. The rest of the neighbourhood was treated in

June 5.

Excesses  
committed  
by the British troops.



CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

June.

somewhat the same stile ; but not with that spirit of total extermination which seemed to rage over Jefferson's possessions. Wherever the army under his Lordship went, the dwelling houses were plundered of every thing which could be carried off. Hundreds of eye witnesses can prove that his lordship's table was served with plate thus pillaged from private houses ;\* though his lordship's character in Great Britain will forbid the belief of his sharing in the plunder. By an estimate made at the time, on the best information that could be collected, the State of Virginia lost, during Cornwallis's attempts to reduce it, 30,000 slaves, about 27,000 of whom died of the small pox and camp fever ; the rest are thought to have been sent partly to the West Indies, and partly to New York, and from thence, before the evacuation, to Nova Scotia and elsewhere. The whole devastations occasioned by the British army, during the six months previous to their surrender at York-Town, are supposed to amount to about 3,000,000 sterling.†

\* Connected with this subject, a little anecdote is told by persons whose regard for truth, and opportunities of correct information, cannot be doubted. Lord Cornwallis slept one night at the house of a Mr. Bates, some distance from the Southanna. In the morning, when his Lordship sat down to a rural, yet neat and comfortable breakfast, he observed an elegant piece of plate, not, indeed heavy, but of exquisite workmanship, and great value. He took it in his hands, looked again and again at every part of it, expressed his admiration of its beauty, and uncerimoniously consigned it to one of his pockets.—The family had religiously preserved this little relic of the original opulence of their ancestors, who had emigrated from England to avoid the persecutions of Church and State.—Juvenal has described something like this in his 8th Satire :

“Now ail is gone ! the stallion made a prey,  
The few brood-mares, and oxen swept away,  
The Lares,—if the household shrine possessed  
One little god that pleased above the rest ;  
Mean spoils, indeed !—”

*Gifford's translation.*

† Documents of unquestionable authority, in the possession of the historian, specify several instances of this war for plunder rather than for conquest, at least, during the period under consideration. One is selected, strongly illustrative as the rest. The narrative says : “At the time of the visit of the enemy to Cary's brook, Col. W. M. Cary, was with his family in the county of Hanover. They were conducted to the Brook by a slave named Daniel, (now alive) belonging to the estate. This man brandishing a sword, with which they had furnished him, over the head of the overseer, demanded the horses of the plantation, and amongst others, more particularly, a fine stallion, then owned by Col. Cary. These, for greater security, had been conveyed into the woods and tied there—but, by the aid of Daniel, were discovered and carried off. The stallion however was recovered at the siege of York. An officer, whose name and grade are not recollected, but certainly a commissioned officer, put into his pocket a dozen silver table spoons. The rest of the family plate was fortunately saved by being buried in a cellar. The enemy broke into the store-room, carried off a part of the stock of groceries, and strewed the remainder over the yard. A number of trunks, containing effects belonging to the family, were preserved from pillage by the resolute remonstrances of a white woman, who lived in the house. No furniture was, however, destroyed, nor any slaves carried off from the Brook, except Daniel, before mentioned. About 40 of Colonel Cary's negroes, on their

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

June.

La Fayette  
is joined by  
Wayne.

The exposed situation of the stores in Albemarle had, from the first moment, filled the Marquis De La Fayette with the utmost anxiety. It was chiefly with a view to the subsequent protection of those stores, that he hastened by rapid and judicious marches, to effect the long contemplated junction with the Pennsylvania line. The celerity of his movements soon brought him to Culpepper County, near the Raccoon Ford, where that junction took place on the 10th of June. Without losing a moment, he ordered the whole of the force thus happily united, to advance towards the shores of James river. Indeed, his fears for the stores at Charlottesville and in the vicinity, had been so great, and his solicitude for their protection so active, that conjecturing the designs of the enemy, he had previously detached Page's troop of light horse, with strict injunctions to use every endeavour for securing the public magazines in that quarter. It was unfortunately too late. After passing Orange Court-house, the officer under whose command that corps had been placed, heard that the enemy had been at Boswell's Ordinary. This intelligence reduced his operations to closely watching the three roads leading from Charlottesville to the lower country, and to conveying to the Marquis speedy and correct information of every occurrence connected with the important objects of the campaign. On this occasion, two gallant and valuable American dragoons, Charles Cocke and John Lyons, unfortunately fell into the hands of the British, while reconnoitring the three notched-road. At the same time, a zealous patriot, whose military and other public services were eminently conspicuous throughout the revolution, Mr. John Walker, indefatigably exerted himself in collecting the fragments of the stores which had felt the destructive fury of the enemy. Mr. Jefferson, although, as before observed, his constitutional term of office had now expired, still continued to devote to his country that zeal and those capacities, for which he had been uniformly distinguished. The crisis was too extraordinary, too imperious for technical formality. The exertion of Mr. William Fleming, the only acting member of the Executive Council for some time before the appointment of Mr. Jefferson's successor, were likewise of the highest service to the State. During the momentary suspension of the Legislative authority, by

---

way to join the British upon their retreat to the lower country, were apprehended in Goochland and sent back. Colonel Cary's losses, during the revolutionary war, were, in other respects, very heavy. Twenty-four of his negroes from estates in the lower country, joined the enemy and never were recovered."

All this, and much more, was done; yet, even in war,

"*Est modus in rebus; sunt certi denique fines,  
Quos ultra citra te nequit consistere rectum!*"

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

the adjournment of the General Assembly from Charlottesville to Staunton, and when, owing to a combination of circumstances, perhaps unparalleled in the history of any State, the Executive chair of Virginia became unoccupied, that gentleman, undeterred by the difficulties and perils of the times, and looking on the salvation of the country as the supreme constitutional law, collected the militia for the purposes of common defence, and performed other acts within the sphere of gubernatorial power only—a conduct truly energetic and meritorious, and for which the thanks of the Legislature, together with commensurate indemnities, were afterwards tendered him!

The anxiety experienced by La Fayette was incessant and well founded. Magazines, uninjured by the enemy, yet remained at Albemarle Old-Court-House.—The accession of the corps under Baron Steuben, and of detachments from Greene's army to the force already commanded by the Marquis, was apprehended by the British General, who also viewed with some alarm the resources which he well knew still to exist between James river and the Dan.—Aware of all this, La Fayette, immediately upon his junction with Wayne's brigade, moved with all possible speed towards Albemarle Old-Court-House. About mid-day, on the 10th of June, his light infantry reached Boswell's Tavern.

Tarleton attempts to destroy the stores at Albemarle Old-Court-House.

On the preceding day, Lord Cornwallis, apprized of the junction just mentioned, and of the advance of his adversary, had issued orders to Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, to destroy the stores at Albemarle Old-Court-House, cross the Fluvanna, disperse the corps under Steuben, intercept any reinforcements from Greene to La Fayette, and spread far and wide the havoc of predatory war, after which the commander of the British legion was to repair to Manchester, where he should find boats to convey himself and his detachment to Richmond, a place to which Cornwallis intended to proceed by easy marches. One road only was deemed practicable for La Fayette; and on that road Tarleton was stationed in such a position as seemed to secure to the British the advantage of forcing the Marquis either to hazard a general action, or to expose his left flank to inevitable destruction. La Fayette had two important objects in view; the one was to retain a position between the enemy and the mountains—the other, to preserve the stores against which the designs of that enemy were evident. A little below Boswell's Tavern, lay a difficult and now disused road, leading from that point to the Rivanna, and which, if rendered practicable, would not only throw the Americans to a greater distance from the foe, but enable them efficiently to cover the threatened magazines. This road, La Fayette caused to be re-opened, and the ensuing day beheld him intrenched behind Mechunk Creek—a po-



CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

His attempt  
is baffled by  
the Mar-  
quis.Cornwallis  
retreats to  
the lower  
country.

June.

Is pursued  
by La Fay-  
ette.

sition naturally unassailable, and commanding the direct route from the British camp to Albemarle Old-Court-House. In doing this, however, he did not cross the Rivanna, as most historians have stated.\* This is a fact well known in that part of Virginia, where the road in question retains to this day the appellation of *The Marquis's road*. While encamped on the Mechunk, La Fayette was reinforced by a numerous corps of rifle militia from the upper country. Still Lord Cornwallis continued to retain over him a decided superiority, in respect both to the skill and to the number of his men. But whether from mistaken views of the American force; whether from a preference of the lower country, as being more favourable to the operations of cavalry, the portion of his army on which he placed his chief reliance; finally, whether from a compliance with secret orders from Sir Henry Clinton, a motive which his official letters sufficiently establish, the British General suddenly abandoned those objects which he had hitherto so keenly pursued, and, by slow and convenient marches, began to retire towards the Eastern borders of the State. In this retreat, Tarleton and Simcoe, with their respective detachments, covered the flanks and the rear of the army. La Fayette, perseveringly adhering to the Fabian method, and never losing sight of what he justly considered as the principal, if not the sole means of his safety, the command of the upper country, followed with slow and cautious steps an adversary, who, even in this retrograde movement, continued to present a formidable attitude. On the 14th of June, we observe him at Allegri's, whence he moved down, along the three notched road, towards the Byrd-Ordinary. His knowledge of the enemy's situation was, at all times, very imperfect. Fresh accessions of riflemen hourly swelled his numbers. The interval which separated the two armies, being now inconsiderable,

\* The historian deeply regrets that his hopes of procuring a copy of the interesting *M. S. Journal* of the Marquis De La Fayette's campaign in Virginia, written by the Marquis himself, have been disappointed.—From a respectable officer of militia at that time, the subjoined description of La Fayette's route has been obtained:

"I joined the Marquis's army the night they left Richmond, and encamped with the army at Winston's plantation, I believe in the county of Hanover.—The next day to Scotch Town, thence to Dandridge's in the said county, where the army halted a day or two.—The route from thence was in the direction of Fredericksburg—after marching about two days, halted at Corbins bridges, in the county of Spotsylvania, where the army lay two nights and one day.—The route from thence, was to Culpepper county, near the Rackoon Ford—where we halted until Wayne's brigade joined.—The route from thence was in bye-roads, in direction of the Rivanna river, through Orange, the upper end of Louisa and Fluvanna counties. Near Boswell's tavern, the army halted one night—and the next day was marched along a new road to Mechunk Creek, which road goes by the name of the Marquis's road to this day.—The army halted a day or two at this place, and the route from thence was generally in the course most direct to Williamsburg."

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

Enters  
Richmond.

June 16.

Moves to-  
wards Wil-  
liamsburg.

and their strength less unequal, it was apprehended by many, less the inherent ardor of La Fayette's disposition should overcome his prudence, and betray him into a decisive engagement. Fortunately for the American cause, the youthful hero sacrificed to the higher considerations of general and ultimate benefits, his eagerness for active operations, and his thirst after military fame.

On the 16th of June, Lord Cornwallis entered Richmond, where his troops, were allowed a few days of repose. The light corps under Simcoe was stationed at Westham, whilst that commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton occupied the Meadow Bridges. La Fayette was then encamped on Allen's Creek, in Goochland County, at a distance of only twenty two miles from the main hostile army. His advanced posts were deemed vulnerable by the watchful and enterprising Tarleton. On the 18th, he suddenly and, as he thought, secretly advanced from his station at the Meadow Bridges, to strike the light corps under Brigadier Mullenberg. The latter, however, was apprized of his design, and fell back upon La Fayette, who had already detached the intrepid Wayne to his support. Thus was Tarleton's hope frustrated; and, instead of the advantage which he had promised to himself from this movement, he lost one of his patrols, intercepted by Lieutenant Colonel Mercer, on his return from a reconnoitring expedition, in the course of which he passed unobserved in the enemy's rear, and satisfactorily ascertained the position of Lord Cornwallis on the heights of Richmond. At this time, Baron Steuben joined the Marquis De La Fayette, with his corps of new levies, amounting to nearly six thousand men. Thus was the American army in Virginia now increased to four thousand effectives; of these upwards of two thousand were regulars, inured by long service to the hardships and vicissitudes of war, and in no way inferior to British veterans. The rest consisted of various bodies of militia, commanded by Continental officers, in consequence of the beneficial system lately adopted by the Executive of the State. In point of numbers, however, and in the efficiency of a well mounted and uncommonly active cavalry, Cornwallis still preserved a decided superiority. After a short halt in Richmond, he resumed his retreat, and moved towards Williamsburg. His march was characterized neither by fear, nor precipitancy. He appeared throughout to be conscious of entire security, and to consult the ease of his troops, while prosecuting some deep laid scheme known only to the Commander in Chief and to himself. But an invisible hand conducted him to ruin and disgrace; he was the chief victim destined to expiate the wrongs of Great Britain towards an injured and oppressed people; and the very place where he anticipated complete triumph and unparalleled glory, was to witness the humiliation of his fall.—But let us follow the regular course of events.



1781

June.

Partial en-  
gagement  
between  
Butler and  
Simcoe.

La Fayette, attentive to the movements of his adversary, no sooner observed his retreat from Richmond, than he himself moved onward, displaying, however, the same salutary circumspection as before, and uniformly keeping his main body at the distance of about twenty miles from the foe. Cornwallis reached Williamsburg on the 25th of June. During his halt in that place, hearing that the Americans had some boats and stores on Chickahominy river, he charged Lieutenant Colonel Simcoe with the destruction of these. The latter, attended by his corps and a party of yagers, easily performed the task. La Fayette, after passing through Richmond, and Newkent Court-house, in pursuit of Cornwallis, had taken post on Tyre's plantation, about twenty miles from Williamsburg. There he was informed by his exploring parties of Simcoe's expedition to the Chickahominy, and immediately detached Lieutenant Colonel Butler, of the Pennsylvania line, with orders to strike the British partizan on his return. Butler was well known for his skill and courage. His achievements at Saratoga had placed him by the side of Morgan, and he had uniformly and gloriously maintained this high ground. The confidence of La Fayette could not be better placed. On the present occasion, where only a partial engagement was sought, the detachment confided to him, consisted, besides his Continentals, of the rifle-corps under the Majors Call and Willis, and about one hundred and twenty horsemen. This last force was commanded by Major M'Pherson, of Pennsylvania. He mounted some infantry behind his dragoons, and seeking Simcoe with unusual ardor and speed, overtook him near Spencer's plantation, six or seven miles above Williamsburg. A sharp conflict immediately ensued, in which the British yagers, and the American cavalry were alternately repulsed. The arrival of the riflemen headed by Call and Willis, gave to the action additional fierceness; but the superiority of the hostile cavalry, compelled Butler's van to fall back upon the body of Continentals stationed in the rear. Here the contest ended, Simcoe resuming his retreat, and Butler not chusing to pursue him, because he was informed that Cornwallis, upon hearing the first fire, had ordered his main body to the support of the returning detachment. The official accounts of the two generals widely differ as to the loss sustained by each party in this action. La Fayette states the enemy's loss at sixty killed and one hundred wounded; Cornwallis says that three officers and thirty privates only were killed and wounded. Among the killed, a Lieutenant Jones seems to have excited peculiar regret. The loss of the Americans in killed and wounded has not been recorded; but if we credit the statement of the British commander, three of their officers, with twenty eight privates, were taken prisoners. La Fayette, perhaps secretly congratu-



**CHAP.  
XIX.**

**1781**

July.

Cornwallis  
prepares to  
cross James  
river.

lating himself on the oversight of that commander, in not availing himself of so favourable an opportunity to compel a general and decisive action, continued in his secure position, with the Chickahominy between himself and the foe, anxiously watching the motions of Cornwallis, and awfully conscious that on the fate of his little army depended the safety of Virginia, of the South, and, eventually, of the whole Union.

In the mean time, the British General was preparing to cross James river, with a further intention of retiring to Portsmouth. This determination originated in orders lately received from Sir Henry Clinton, who, about this period, seems to have felt considerable alarm for the safety of New-York, in consequence of circumstances which will be presently developed. By this alarm, Sir Henry was induced to urge the return of part of the forces under Lord Cornwallis's command in Virginia, unless some pre-eminently important object should render their detention necessary, or unless his Lordship should be disposed to carry the war to the upper part of the Chesapeak, where efficient co-operation was expected from the loyalists. Should a portion of the troops, designated in General Clinton's orders, be sent to New York, Cornwallis was then directed to fix, in the vicinity of Williamsburg or York, upon some salubrious situation, favourable to the establishment of a defensive post, and convenient to predatory maritime expeditions, in which it was contemplated to annihilate the remaining stores and resources of Virginia.—Under these circumstances, though chagrined at the prospect of being soon reduced to defensive operations in a State, against which he had planned the most vigorous offensive measures, Cornwallis resolved to comply with Sir Henry's requisition for the return of the most efficient part of his troops; but deeming Williamsburg, York, or any neighbouring station, untenable with the rest, and ill calculated for the security of shipping, he adopted the plan already mentioned, of crossing James river, and retiring to Portsmouth, a place where the proposed embarkation of the demanded reinforcement would be most conveniently effected. In pursuance of this determination, after halting nine days in Williamsburg, his Lordship advanced, on the 14th of July, to James Town Island, upon which he had previously fixed as the fittest scite for the transportation of his army to the Southern banks of the James. Having reached that point, he encamped on a piece of ground that covered a ford into the Island; and, on the same evening, the Queen's rangers passed the river. The 5th and the 6th were employed in conveying across the wheel-carriages of every description, the baggage, and bat-horses. The main body of the army still continued in the same encampment, but it was the intention of Cornwallis to pass over with it on the following day.

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

July.

La Fayette  
resolves on  
attacking  
him.

La Fayette, who had hitherto so happily checked the native ardor of his temper, now thought it not only justifiable, but expedient, to depart from his usual caution. The intention of Cornwallis, he did not doubt; and the passage of his adversary over so large a stream could not fail to present, when the greater part of the army should have crossed, an opportunity of striking his rear, too plausible and too inviting, not to be eagerly seized even by a General of maturer age. The chief difficulty was to ascertain with precision and accuracy the moment which would ensure the success of the attack. With a view, to this, La Fayette had detached exploring parties in various directions. Lieutenant Colonel Mercer displayed on this occasion his usual activity. During the night of the 3rd, he passed unobserved the right flank of the enemy, and informed his commander of their subsequent movement towards James Town. La Fayette immediately resolved to strike a partial blow at Cornwallis, and put his army in motion towards the same point. On the evening of the 5th, a short interval of eight miles only separated him from the foe. To execute the meditated attack early on the following day, was his settled intention—and in this he had been confirmed by the undoubted passage of troops on the 4th, and the continual crossing and re-crossing of boats since that time. In the forenoon of the 6th, however, as he was advancing at the head of his troops, ready to fall on what he mistook for the British rear, and flushed with hopes of approaching victory, he received intelligence which produced some hesitation in his mind. Lieutenant Colonel Mercer, intent on ascertaining the real situation of the British, had cautiously proceeded as far as the well known mansion at Greenspring. There he was informed by a fugitive negro, whom chance threw in his way, of the proximity of Tarleton's corps, and of the encampment of Lord Cornwallis, with his main force at a Church, not more than one mile in front. Eluding with some difficulty the pursuit of the foe, by whom he was now discovered, Mercer hastened to communicate to the Marquis the information which he had just collected. After a few moments of suspense, La Fayette determined to move onward, until he could procure additional and undoubted intelligence. Soon he was rejoined by two young dragoons, who had been detached to the river with glasses to observe the passage of the hostile army. Unable distinctly to perceive objects, those inexperienced emissaries, had mistaken the baggage for troops, and their report overruled the salutary caution which Mercer's more correct intelligence had suggested. La Fayette's second, General Wayne, ever panting after battle, encouraged an opinion to which the gallant Marquis was naturally inclined. A conviction seemed to prevail that only a covering party had remained with Cornwallis



CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

Affair near  
James  
Town.

and final dispositions were now made for an attack, the success of which was deemed infallible. The British commander received information of La Fayette's approach about noon on the 6th; and took every measure in his power to confirm the belief that his rear-guard only now remained. He drew up the major part of his army in compact order on the main land; deployed a few troops on the Island so as to magnify their apparent numbers; drew in his light parties; and directed his piquets to suffer themselves to be insulted and driven in. By this coincidence of circumstances calculated to delude, an error was perpetuated which exposed the American army in Virginia to the most imminent peril of utter annihilation.

About three in the afternoon, La Fayette's army began to move from Greenspring. This late hour was judiciously and happily fixed upon. If only a strong hostile party should be found at James Town, the remaining part of the day would suffice for its destruction; if, on the contrary, the main body of Cornwallis's troops should be encountered, the intervening shades of the approaching night, would shield the Americans from ruin. In their advance to the enemy, not mere than one mile and a half distant, La Fayette's troops had to pass over a causeway, extending from the house at Greenspring, to the Williamsburg road, through a tract of low and sunken ground, impracticable to either infantry or cavalry. The time consumed in the passage of this defile retarded the approach of the Americans to the British till near sun set. The rifle corps under Call and Willis, and a patrol of dragoons, formed the front of the assailants. These were followed by the cavalry of Armand and Mercer's troop, headed by Major M'Pherson. The Continental infantry under Wayne, supported the whole. Steuben was left at Greenspring with the militia, forming a reserve obviously too remote from the acting corps for any efficient purpose. When the advancing column reached the road, parties of riflemen were thrown on its flanks, whilst the cavalry continued to move in front. The action was soon commenced by a desultory fire of the enemy's yagers. M'Pherson and Mercer being then ordered to take the command of the rifle corps, rapidly led them on to the attack, and drove in the hostile piquets, with much confusion and some loss on the side of the British. This advantage was keenly pursued by the American riflemen, who, taking post in a ditch covered by a rail fence, recommenced their fire with considerable effect.—Two battalions of Continental infantry led on by Majors Galvan and Willis, supported by two pieces of artillery, under the direction of Captain Savage, now joined the riflemen, and assisted them in successfully maintaining for sometime a most arduous conflict against the enemy, who now advanced in a body headed by Lieutenant Col. Yorke on



CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

the right, and Lieutenant-Colonel Dundas on the left.—The superiority of the foe, however, was too great to be long resisted: the riflemen first gave way, then the cavalry, and finally the light infantry. They all fell back upon Wayne, as did also Capt. Savage with his two field pieces. The brave leader of the Pennsylvania line had drawn up his men in compact order, under cover of an adjacent wood. He repeatedly directed them to charge the enemy with fixed bayonets, but local circumstances prevented the execution of this order, and allowed only a close and murderous fire. La Fayette, who by this time had discovered his mistake, and become convinced that he had to contend with the main body of the British army, observing that Wayne was nearly outflanked on both sides, ordered him to retreat to the second line of Continentals, drawn up about half a mile in his rear. The darkness of the night favoured this retreat; it was, however, found necessary to abandon the two field-pieces—after which the morass in front of Greenspring was re-crossed, and the acting corps, together with the reserve, proceeded to a more remote and safer encampment. Whether from his apprehension of some ambuscade, or from what was with him a more powerful consideration than fear, a desire of quickly transmitting to Sir Henry Clinton the required assistance, Cornwallis attempted no pursuit, but, in the course of the night, crossed over into James-Town Island, and soon afterwards proceeded to Portsmouth.

Cornwallis  
passes to  
the S. side  
of James  
river.

In this affair, one hundred and eighteen of the Continental troops, among whom ten officers, were killed, wounded, or taken. The British state their loss, both in killed and wounded, at five officers and seventy privates.

Thus did La Fayette again escape impending destruction. For this escape, he was indebted partly to the lateness of the time when the action commenced, as one hour more of day-light would probably have been attended with the utter ruin of his army, and partly to that languor of exertion which had characterized the conduct of Cornwallis in almost every stage of his expedition through Virginia. Cramped in his operations by the orders of the Commander in Chief at New York, either disgusted with the subordinate task of executing plans carved by another, or solely bent on accelerating the embarkation of relief demanded by his principal, he no longer displayed that ardor and activity which had marked his progress through the Carolinas. The annihilation of the force under his rival, certainly ought to have constituted his primary, and, indeed, his sole object; and the inferiority of that force made the attainment of that object practicable and easy. To this was added a circumstance highly favourable to his success, the youth of his adversary. Yet, after a vaunting assurance

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

July.

that the *Boy* could not escape him, and a few transient efforts to realize that assurance, he was seen all at once transferring his thoughts from measures essentially connected with the subjugation of the South, to the inferior aims of predatory warfare. The pursuit and annihilation of La Fayette were relinquished for the inglorious and ineffectual purpose of burning tobacco, destroying scattered magazines, dispersing raw levies, capturing a few officers of militia, driving the Legislature of the State beyond the Blue Ridge, plundering private property, and paroling an unarmed and inactive portion of the people. In short, Lord Cornwallis was in Virginia totally different from the proud conqueror of Gates, and the able opponent of Greene.

This campaign crowned La Fayette with immortal honor. His zeal, his energy, his sagacity, the skill and promptitude with which he retrieved his occasional errors, the patience and even the cheerfulness with which he participated in the many wants and privations of his troops, the enthusiastic spirit which he infused into those troops and the people at large, will ever be remembered by the grateful Virginians; and judges of the military science allow him no inconsiderable praise for having been able not only to save his comparatively small army, but to manœuvre in the face of a superior enemy, in an open country, even before his junction with Wayne and Steuben. During this most gloomy period of the revolutionary war, La Fayette remained undismayed and serene; he did not despair a moment of the common cause, and he exhibited, through the whole, a memorable specimen of premature ability and heroic courage.

Tarleton is detached to Bedford.

After crossing James river, Cornwallis had detached Lieut. Colonel Tarleton to the distant County of Bedford, for the double purpose of destroying magazines said to have been formed in that County, and of intercepting some light troops reported to be on their march from Greene's army to that of La Fayette. Neither stores nor troops, were found by the British partizan, who rejoined his General on the 15th, in the County of Suffolk. The reinforcement destined for New-York had been hastened to Portsmouth, and thither Cornwallis himself now repaired. With his infantry, he encamped in front of the works; the cavalry, crossing Elizabeth river found abundant supplies in the fertile County of Princess-Anne.

The American army, reinforced by a troop of dragoons from the Town of Baltimore, retired to the Forks of York river, where it was permitted to enjoy a short interval of well-earned repose. The militia had now been discharged; and all active operations now appeared suspended, with the exception of the movement of a body of infantry conveyed to the South side of James river, under the command of

Brigadier-General Wayne, but too inconsiderable for successful enterprize.

The transports on board of which the troops required by Clinton had been embarked, were yet in the harbour at Portsmouth, when an order was received from him, countermanding their sailing. Sir Henry urged the execution of his plan for the establishment of a post on the waters of the Chesapeak, and recommended for that purpose some favourable point within the neck of land at Williamsburg (the re-possession of which, if abandoned, he strongly advised) either at Old-Point-Comfort, on Hampton-Road, or at York-Town, on the river of that name. Independently of the predatory maritime excursions which the establishment of such a post would favour, Clinton wished to secure an eligible station for line of battle ships during the winter months, and such a station could no where be procured, North of the Chesapeak. The British Admiral, on the American coast, had himself suggested the plan, and expressed a preference of Old Point Comfort. Accordingly, Lord Cornwallis lost no time in directing that seite to be examined by the engineers and the officers of the navy. Their report was unfavourable, and York and Gloucester were therefore selected, as the only places capable of answering the requisite purposes. Portsmouth was immediately evacuated. Part of the British army proceeded, in transports and boats, up the Chesapeak. The posts fixed upon were easily seized, and speedily fortified. Cornwallis, entrusting to Lieutenant-Colonel Dundas the defence of the works on the side of Gloucester, took himself charge of the post at York. The concentration of the whole British force at those points, was completed on the 22d of August.

This change of position, on the part of the enemy, recalled La Fayette to his pristine activity. He broke up from his camp on the Pamunkey, and ordered the detachment under Wayne, now on the Southern side of James river, to rejoin his main body. His first care was to circumscribe the extensive range embraced by Simcoe, on the side of Gloucester, and by Tarleton, on that of York, in their foraging excursions. With this view, Col. John Taylor, formerly of Hazen's regiment, was stationed at Gloucester Court house, for the protection of the adjacent country: another officer took post, for a similar purpose, at Chiswell's ordinary, on the road from York to Fredericksburg. The officer at this last post suffered his corps to be surprised and dispersed by the enterprizing and impetuous Tarleton; but Colonel Taylor successfully withstood every hostile attempt against his station, until relieved, early in September, by Brigadier-Gen. Weedon, who had again been called to the command of a portion of the militia. This judicious officer, who fully understood the value of that skill and intrepidity which experience

York-Town  
and Gloucester point  
are occupied  
by Cornwallis.

La Fayette  
encamps in  
the neighborhood.



CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

Situation of  
the North-  
ern army.

imparts in military affairs, selected among the militia such individuals as had previously served in the regular army, incorporated them into an élite of about two hundred effectives, and detached them in front of the militia, under the direction of Lieutenant-Colonel Mercer, whose zeal and usefulness had been so conspicuously manifested in the early part of the campaign. By this and other salutary arrangements, the depredations of the enemy were promptly and efficiently restrained, on the Gloucester side of the river.

But it is time to look back to the events which took place in the North, whilst Virginia witnessed the transaction just described.

Gloomy and alarming was the situation of the main American army, at the commencement of 1781. Mutiny, which the multiplied and prolonged distresses of the troops had often threatened, now openly broke forth. On the 1st of January, the Pennsylvania line, complaining of numerous and intolerable grievances, took and loudly avowed a resolution to obtain prompt and full redress from Congress, and accordingly began to march towards Philadelphia. The complaints of the discontented soldiery were founded in justice; and a Committee of members of Congress, with a deputation from the Executive Council of Pennsylvania, adjusted the discharges and arrears which they claimed. This revolt suggested to the enemy sanguine hopes of a total dissolution of the American army. Sir Henry Clinton endeavoured to fan the flame of discord; and to draw the mutineers to the side of Britain. His seducing proposals, however, were magnanimously rejected; neglected and aggrieved as the revolvers certainly had been, they refused to betray a country for which most of them had bled, and which they all tenderly loved. The British emissaries employed in the dangerous task of corrupting their fidelity, were by them surrendered to the military authority, tried and punished with an ignominious death. The policy of yielding to an armed soldiery, however just their claims, is always pernicious. Part of the Jersey brigade soon manifested similar symptoms of a mutinous spirit. Washington, sensible that such disorder, if not restrained with energy and decision, must ultimately dissolve the army, determined to crush military anarchy by a vigorous effort. Brigadier General Howe was commissioned to bring the mutineers to unconditional submission. This was happily effected. The menacing effervescence subsided; and the attention of the States to the wants and sufferings of their defenders, roused by these violent eruptions, became more efficient. Yet, from the almost total ruin of the public credit, and from the imbecility of a government, possessing no coercive powers equal to the remedy of existing evils, General Washington continued to labour under incalculable

difficulties. How, with such scanty means for the subsistence, clothing, and pay of the army, he was able to prevent its dissolution, will ever be a matter of surprize. There is, it would appear, in a nation earnestly bent on the support of liberty, and the acquisition of Independence, an indestructible principle of vitality, a creative spirit sufficient to overcome every difficulty, to baffle every calculation, to deride every hope, founded on the annihilation of its resources. It was that spirit which reconciled the people of America to sacrifices and deprivations of every sort—which triumphed over all the perplexities and embarrassments, arising from inexperience, weakness and fluctuation in the general Government, and from supineness or tardiness in some of the States. The American revolution was destined to afford a new and striking instance of the efficacy of moral forces. In the opinions and feelings of the people, in their attachment and conscious interest, we must look for the real sources of that mysterious power of resistance, which irregular and fitful as its exertions appeared, ultimately enabled Congress to overcome the systematic and condensed hostility of Britain.

Early in the present year, Lieutenant Col. Laurens appeared at the Court of Versailles, as the special Envoy of Congress. His mission had a double object. It was to solicit a loan from his Most Christian Majesty, and to urge the co-operation of the French fleet in some decisive enterprise against the common enemy. The last point was fully obtained; but, willing as France was to aid Congress, in every respect to the utmost of her power, her own pecuniary embarrassments opposed extensive grants. Her difficulties had commenced in the pompous reign of Louis XIV. and been greatly increased by the extravagance of the Regent, and the voluptuous and dissolute career of Louis XV. The young and virtuous monarch, now on the throne, Louis XVI. had inherited, with a splendid sceptre, immense financial difficulties. He was, therefore, compelled to narrow down the assistance urged by Congress to six millions of *livres tournois*, which he generously granted as a subsidy for the present year. Upon a further representation of the alarming distresses of America, he became security for a loan to be opened in Holland, on account of the United States; and, as there was little probability of obtaining any money there in season, he liberally agreed that the sum to be borrowed should, in the first instance, be advanced to America from the Royal Treasury. In the existing crisis, this aid, joined to the gold and silver introduced into the United States, through the channel of an advantageous commerce with the West Indies, and by means of the French army in Rhode Island, proved essentially beneficial to the country. It removed the almost intolerable pressure of those complicated difficulties, under

Pecuniary  
aid granted  
by France!

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

Cessation of  
paper-mo-  
ney.

which Congress laboured for the maintenance of the armed force. Bright prospects again succeeded the cheerless gloom, which had so deeply overspread the Union as to dim even that splendour of constancy, which had hitherto been displayed by the Congress. With a view to obtain from the Court of Madrid efficient succours in money, and other requisites of war, they had, in a desponding hour, instructed Mr. Jay to relinquish, if expedient, the claims of the United States to the navigation of the Mississippi, below the 31st degree of North latitude, and to a free port on that river, within the Spanish Territory. Fortunately, the prudence of Mr. Jay still kept open these important claims.

An event long expected by all, ardently wished for by the friends of Great Britain, and no less ardently deprecated by those of America, took place in the course of the present year, and introduced a new æra in the financial concerns of the Union. The bills of credit sunk beneath their own bulk. Their extinction, however, was not attended with any of those visible effects which, it had been thought by friends and foes, would, upon such an occurrence, convulse the country. The contest was grounded in the hearts of the people, and whatever tended to promote its success, easily conciliated their acquiescence. They understood the original necessity of paper-money; its operation was considered as a tax, oppressive, indeed, to many individuals, but vitally useful to the great body of the nation. There are cases in which the people are so intimately blended with their Government, that the acts of the latter are, in effect, popular acts; and, whatever their result may be, cannot be understood to have originated in any other views than those of public utility. Accordingly, that violation of the national faith, which, in 1781, made 200,000,000 of paper-dollars redeemable by 5,000,000 of silver ones, not only excited no irritation, no tumult, but was cheerfully assented to. Towards the close of February, Robert Morris had been appointed superintendent of Finance, "to examine into the state of the public debts, expenditures and revenue; to digest and report plans for improving and regulating the finances, and for establishing order and economy in the expenditure of public money." The genius and activity of that gentleman eminently fitted him for those various objects. His candour dispelled those ideal prospects which the delusive expectation of extensive foreign loans had hitherto presented to the people. For the empty bubbles of hope, he substituted the solid foundations of revenue, and pointed out to his countrymen the termination of the arduous contest, in a steady, persevering, and judicious application of national resources. Fugitive, ephemeral expedients were exploded; chaos yielded to order; intricacy to simplicity; distrust to confidence. Ele-

Robert  
Morris is  
appointed  
superin-  
tendant of  
the Finan-  
ces.



ments hitherto inert or barren, were vivified by a proper system of taxation ; and peace became more probable, in proportion as the ability of the United States to continue the war, became greater. A spirit of useful reform seems to have actuated the Congress about this time. The complex and unwieldy machinery of Boards or Committees for the great Executive departments, being abandoned, a Secretary of War, a Secretary of Marine, and a Secretary for Foreign Affairs, were added to the superintendant of Finance. It was thus that experience gradually led the federal system towards those improvements which it has since received.

By the judgment, economy, and zeal of the superintendant of Finance, the most pressing wants of the army were immediately relieved. The establishment of a National Bank enabled him to use by anticipation, the resources of the country ; his own private credit was, at first, beneficially exerted : afterwards the aids obtained from France, or through her channel, but, above all, an efficient system of taxation, accomplished in a great measure, the herculean task which had devolved upon the *Financier*.

Let us now examine what was the situation of Washington's army, in respect to numbers. The authority of Congress had directed an army of 37,000 men to be in camp by the first of January, 1781. This extensive plan never was executed. In the month of May, Washington counted only 7,000 men, of whom between 4 and 5,000 were fit for action. The situation of the South has been described ; the Indian combination menacing the Western frontier, we have also mentioned ; the gloom of the horizon was still deepened by the appearance of hostile clouds on the side of Canada, and by symptoms of discord in the tract of country which now constitutes the State of Vermont.—Vigorous operations against New-York, the seat of British power in America had long been fondly contemplated by the Commander in Chief. To this object he had steadily adhered, through every fluctuation of force, and vicissitude of fortune, resolved to make the attempt so soon as circumstances should promise a favourable issue. To it he now reverted with increased eagerness, convinced that, if an attack on New-York, should fail of ultimate success, it would, at least, have the happy effect of relieving the South, by compelling Sir Henry Clinton to recall a considerable part of the British troops from that quarter.—At the same time, Washington kept his eyes open on Virginia, where a successful blow might, he presumed, be eventually inflicted on Cornwallis.—The important information brought by the Count De Barras, who had been appointed to the command of the French Squadron on the American coast, and who reached Boston early in May, with the Viscount De Rochambeau and a reinforcement of

Plan of an  
attack upon  
New York.

CHAP.  
XIX.

---

1781

May 21.

1,500 men, encouraged the most sanguine hopes. It stated among other interesting circumstances, that the Count De Grasse, with twenty ships of the line, had been ordered to the West-Indies, but directed at the same time, to co-operate with General Washington and Count De Rochambeau, during the hurricane months. He might be expected with certainty towards the close of July. In consequence of this intelligence, General Washington hastened to Wethersfield in Connecticut, there to concert with Rochambeau and Barras, a plan of subsequent operations. De Barras could not attend their conference, and measures were settled by the two Generals. They substantially agreed upon a junction of their respective forces on the Hudson, and an enterprize against New-York, or, should this prove impracticable, they determined to direct, upon the arrival of De Grasse, the weight of the combined naval and land forces, against any British post, where the hope of success should invite their efforts. After this interview, General Washington wrote to Congress, letters, in which he stated as its result, the plan of an attack upon New-York, by the joint forces of France and America. The express carrying these letters, and other dispatches urging adequate reinforcements of regulars and militia, was intercepted in the Jerseys. The intelligence which they contained, combined with the subsequent movements and preparations of the allied armies, alarmed Sir Henry Clinton for the safety of New-York, and influenced his determination to withdraw from Virginia a portion of the troops under Lord Cornwallis. Hence the orders which cramped the operations of the latter, and which were too late recalled for his success, or even security.

July.

In the beginning of July, General Washington with increased, though not complete numbers advanced, to the White Plains, where Rochambeau likewise proceeded. The combined armies took a position overawing King's Bridge and its environs. Before this junction was effected, the Commander in Chief had attempted to seize on the British posts in the North of York Island, and meditated an attack on a corps of light troops stationed at Morrisania, under Colonel Delany. For this double purpose, the New Jersey line, and numerous bodies of militia, had been ordered to converge towards King's Bridge. These threatening movements, together with the advance of the French troops, and the certainty of the directions given to the Count De Grasse by his government, vigorously to co-operate, during the summer, with Washington and Rochambeau, kept Sir Henry Clinton in a continued state of alarm for the post under his immediate command. This satisfactorily accounts for his pressing order to Lord Cornwallis. The arrival of a reinforcement from Europe, to the amount of nearly 3,000 men, in some degree calmed his

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

This plan is  
relinquish-  
ed for offen-  
sive opera-  
tions a-  
gainst  
Cornwallis.

August.

August 25.

fears ; but it was, at the same time, one of the circumstances which induced General Washington, finally to relinquish his favorite object, the reduction of New York, and to turn the storm of war against the ravages of the South. Some British historians have considered the intercepted communications of the American Commander in Chief, respecting a concerted attack upon Sir Henry, and all the ulterior movements of the combined forces in the neighborhood of King's Bridge and Staten-Island, as so many different parts of a well arranged and successful feint ;\* but this is an erroneous conjecture. The original and primary object of Washington, undoubtedly was New York ; his views against Cornwallis were subordinate and eventual. It was not before the month of August, that his attention was turned to the Southward, as the definite scene of those offensive operations, in which it was desirable to employ the present campaign. To this determination he was impelled by the slowness of the States in complying with his requisitions for men ; by the accession of strength just received at New-York ; and by the important information that Count De Grasse was to have sailed from Cape Francois for the Chesapeake, on the third of August, with a fleet of about 25 sail of the line, having on board upwards of 3,000 soldiers. The instructions of the French admiral, and his engagements with the Spaniards, would not, it was positively stated, allow him to remain on the American coast after the middle of October. Then it was, that General Washington saw the expediency of changing the point of attack. With decision and promptitude, he settled with Rochambeau, De Barras, and La Fayette, the outlines of the new scheme, which it was all important to conceal as long as possible, from Sir Henry Clinton. For this last purpose, entrusting to General Heath the defence of the posts on the Hudson, the Commander in Chief crossed this river with the combined armies, marched in such a direction, and gave to all his movements and operations such an aspect, as to confirm the opinion that his real design was to seize on Staten-Island, or to occupy, near Sandy Hook, a position calculated to protect the entrance of the French fleet into the harbour of New-York. So strong were the original impressions of Sir Henry, and so well managed the deception, that, even after it became necessary for the allied Chiefs to draw up the curtain, and, leaving the route that led down the Hudson, to march directly across the Jerseys, the enemy considered this movement as a feint. It was only when Washington had crossed the Delaware, that his real object began to be suspected by the

\* Annual Register, &c.



CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

Incursion of  
Arnold into  
Connecti-  
cut.

Sept'r. 6.

British General. His march could not then be molested ; but to recall his steps, if possible, Arnold was directly to fall with impetuosity upon Connecticut. To attack and desolate his native soil, suited the traitors infuriated mind. The corps placed under him for that expedition, passing through the sound in transports, landed about 3 miles from New London, on both sides of the harbour. On the Western side, a redoubt and Fort Trumbull constituted the American defences. Against these, Arnold advanced with his division. They were evacuated at his approach, and the men conveyed across the river, into Fort Griswold, on Groton Hill. In that Fort, the intrepid Lieutenant Colonel Ledyard commanded. Attacked, on three different sides, by the British division under Colonel Eyre, he made a vigorous and obstinate resistance. Eyre was slain. Montgomery, the second in command, met with a similar fate. Nearly 200 more of the assailants were killed and wounded. Overpowered by numbers, the gallant Ledyard was compelled to surrender his sword. It was instantly plunged into his bosom, and his murder was followed by the carnage of the greater part of the garrison. An act worthy of an expedition over which the dark genius of a traitor presided ! Arnold easily possessed himself of New-London, which he plundered and burnt. The militia of the neighbourhood began to assemble ; and such was the idea entertained by the British of their enterprize and firmness, that a retreat was judged necessary, and immediately executed. Owing to this circumstance, the barracks, and a large magazine of gunpowder at Fort Griswold, escaped destruction. The primary object of this incursion was frustrated, the plan in which General Washington was now engaged being too important and too decisive, to yield to a desire of repressing predatory and partial operations of the enemy. The injury inflicted on the people of Connecticut was immense ; but it proved, in the end, detrimental to the British interest. Such expeditions invariably roll back upon their authors the tide of ruin.

Advance of  
the com-  
bined ar-  
mies to Vir-  
ginia.

In the mean while, the allied armies passing through Philadelphia, on the 3rd and 4th of September, pursued their march to the head of Elk. The Commander in Chief was not without apprehensions, lest Cornwallis should escape into the Carolinas : he therefore, awaited with the utmost anxiety, the completion of the measures announced by the French admiral.

The Commander of the British fleet in the West Indies, Rodney, knew that De Grasse intended to be absent from the West Indies during the hurricane months, and then to visit the coast of the United States. But either the desire of securing the late immense plunder of St. Eustatius, rendered him inattentive to great national concerns, or he imagined that the Count would employ the larger portion

of his fleet in protecting from Cape Francois to the ports of France a valuable convoy of merchantmen, and retain only a few ships for co-operating with the force already at Rhode-Island. He therefore contented himself with detaching to the Chesapeak, where he had previously directed Admiral Graves to repair, Sir Samuel Hood with 14 sail of the line, and some frigates. Graves was accidentally prevented from receiving Admiral Rodney's communication; and if he had received it, the damage sustained by his ships in his late cruise off Boston, rendered a compliance impracticable. When therefore Sir Samuel Hood reached the Chesapeak, on the 25th of August, he found it unoccupied, and immediately steered for New-York, where Graves was refitting his squadron. On the very day that Hood appeared off the Capes of Virginia, Count De Barras, who now commanded the French naval force at Rhode-Island, sailed from Newport for the Chesapeak, taking a circuitous route, in order to elude the vigilance of a superior foe. He had on board the heavy ordnance and other implements, necessary for the contemplated investiture of York. Graves, hastily completing his repairs, stood out to sea, in expectation to meet with either De Barras, or De Grasse. United with that of Hood, his fleet now amounted to 19 sail of the line, and several frigates.

Count De Grasse, trusting the rich convoy with which he had sailed from the West Indies, to the protection of one ship of the line, and a few frigates, directed his course for the Chesapeak, where he arrived on the 30th of August. An officer stationed by General La Fayette at Cape Henry, to watch his arrival, immediately repaired on board his ship, and gave him ample intelligence of the situation of affairs, and of the measures intended against Cornwallis. General Washington was immediately apprized of the arrival of the long expected fleet: he received the joyful information at Chester, in Pennsylvania. Nor did De Grasse lose a moment for the promotion of the well concerted plan. He sent up four of his ships to block up the mouth of York river, while some of his frigates conveyed up the James, the Marquis De St. Simon, with the troops under his command, with a view to effect a junction with La Fayette, and to make dispositions calculated to prevent the escape of Cornwallis into the Carolinas.

Admiral Graves received no intelligence of the arrival of the French, nor they of his approach, until the 5th of September, when the van of the British fleet reached Cape Henry. The French fleet lay at anchor, to the number of 24 sail of the line, off Lynhaven Bay, extending towards the middle-ground. The nature of the fleet in view, without the Capes, was soon ascertained by De Grasse to be hostile: he immediately threw out a signal for his ships to slip their cables, and severally to form the line as they could

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

Sir Samuel Hood arrives on the American coast.

August 25.

Count De Grasse reaches the Chesapeak. August 30.

Naval engagement between De Grasse and Graves.

Sept'r. 5.



CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

The French  
squadron  
from Rhode  
Island, en-  
ters the  
Chesapeake.

Sept'r. 10.

Movement  
of the com-  
bined army.

Critical si-  
tuation of  
Lord Corn-  
wallis.

come up, with their heads to the Eastward. Various manœuvres were practised on both sides, which delayed the engagement of the adverse fleets until 4 in the afternoon, and that engagement was only a partial one. The foremost ships on both sides suffered considerably: the night put an end to the conflict. The injury sustained by Graves, and the anxiety of De Grasse to secure the Chesapeake, and cover the arrival of De Barras, prevented a renewal of the action, although the two hostile fleets were in view of each other for 5 successive days. During this time, the squadron from Rhode Island happily entered the Bay; and two British frigates, which had been sent to cut the French Luoy's at the anchorage ground, were intercept-ed and taken. The British evacuating and burning the *Terrible*, returned to New-York, to repair their damages. —They claimed the advantage in the late naval contest; but the unerring criterion of victory, is the accomplishment of the end proposed. In the present case, the object of De Grasse was the undisturbed possession of the Chesapeake, and as he obtained that, to him the fortune of the day substantially belonged.

When the allied army reached the head of Elk, maritime transportation could not be procured for the whole. The light troops only were embarked; the rest pursued their route to Baltimore and Annapolis. After Count De Barras had safely entered the Bay, the transports and frigates with him furnished a prompt and easy conveyance for a large portion of the army from those places to Virginia. General Washington himself, attended by the Count De Rochambeau and the Chevalier De Chastellux, proceeded by land to Williamsburg, now the Head-Quarters of La Fayette, and arrived there on the 14th of September. Anxious to ensure the success of the meditated blow, he repaired with several officers of rank, French and American, on board *Larille de Paris*, the Admiral's ship, where the plan of the siege was ultimately arranged.

Thus did the cloud of danger, hanging over Cornwallis, thicken apace. Sensible of this, he had imparted his fears to Sir Henry Clinton, and received solemn assurances of prompt and efficient relief, in a letter bearing date the 6th of September. Four thousand troops, he was told, were already embarked for the purpose. Admiral Digby, too, was on the American coast and hourly expected at New-York with naval and military aids. This induced Cornwallis to think his situation not entirely desperate. He was unwilling to abandon a post which his instructions bound him to defend—the possession of which was preparatory to important and decisive operations against Virginia—and with which he must have sacrificed a considerable quantity of artillery, ships of war, provisions and stores, together with his sick and wounded. This accounts for



his not attacking La Fayette and St. Simon, before the arrival of the Confederate army, with a view to open his way into the Carolinas. The hope of relief, too, prevented him from endeavouring to escape to New York by the Gloucester side. At the same time that he was confident of succour, he did not neglect to fortify himself. Gloucester Point, which projects far into the river, and rises very little above its surface, was occupied, and completely secured by strong defences. Opposite to that, the Southern bank of the stream, steep and commanding, was strengthened with batteries, protecting the communication between the two posts. Other works were erected both for the immediate defence of the town of York, and for impeding hostile approach; the latter consisting of a range of outer redoubts and field-defences. The protection of Gloucester Point was entrusted to Lieut. Col. Dundas, with a detachment of infantry, soon after joined by all the cavalry. That post was important to Cornwallis, as connected with the defence of the harbour, the procuring of forage and other supplies, and, eventually, with the promised accession of strength. The main body of the British army was encamped on the open grounds about York Town, under cover of the out-works before mentioned.

Meanwhile, the several divisions of the combined army, rapidly converged at Williamsburg. The last arrived there on the 25th of September. The whole regular force amounted to about 12,000 men; to which must be added 5,000 militia, under the command of Governor Nelson. Every thing was now prepared for the investiture of the hostile posts; and no doubts were entertained of the most complete success. Yet, at this auspicious juncture, Washington was considerably alarmed by a communication from the French Admiral. Intelligence had been received of reinforcements just brought to New York by Admiral Digby. This circumstance rendered an attempt for the relief of Cornwallis, and consequently an attack on the French fleet, highly probable. De Grasse, impelled by an active mind, ever thirsting after enterprize and fame, and deeming besides, his present situation unfavourable to naval evolutions in case of an attack, resolved to leave a few frigates to block up the mouths of James and York rivers; and himself to go with his fleet in quest of the enemy—whom he intended to block up in the harbour of New York, if yet there. Washington immediately perceived all the dangers of this design. Should the French Admiral leave the Bay, adverse winds and a variety of other circumstances eventually might prevent his return to it; and during his absence a superior naval force of the enemy would probably rescue Cornwallis from impending ruin. The issue of the present undertaking ought not to be left to the caprices of fortune, or the fickleness of the winds.

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

The Allies  
advance a-  
gainst York.  
Sept'r. 28th.

September.

If Count De Grasse found his present station too confined for successful movements, General Washington intreated him to cruize off the Capes, so as to be able to intercept any enemy steering towards them, and himself to re-enter the Bay, whenever expedient. These salutary representations prevailed upon De Grasse; he relinquished his views of more animated, more brilliant, but less certain operations. He preserved his station in the Bay, and, for the purpose of commanding its entrance, erected batteries on Point Comfort.

On the 28th, the allied army marched in 4 columns, from Williamsburg towards York. In the general orders which Washington issued on this occasion, he strongly recommended to his troops, in case they should be encountered on their march, to use the bayonet, as their best and most efficient weapon, and thus to cure the vanity of the British troops, who proudly boasted a decided superiority in that close and trying combat. But no opposition was met with. About noon the heads of the columns reached their respective station. The French corps, consisting of about 7,000, extending from the banks of the river to Beaverdam Creek, began the investment. The grenadiers and chasseurs, commanded by the Baron De Viomenil, formed the vanguard. Nothing material happened on this day; after driving in some piquets and cavalry of the enemy, the troops encamped for the night. The next day, the American army completed the investment by occupying the space between the east side of Beaverdam Creek, and the river below the town. Cornwallis, placing much reliance on the strength of his defences, the effects of desperate valour, and the fortunate chances of war, wished to be attacked, but Washington was too consummate a General to commit to the hazards of an assault, what he had it in his power to secure by regular approaches.

On the evening of the 28th, Lord Cornwallis received an express from Sir Henry Clinton. He was informed that, in a council held on the 24th, it had been determined to embark 5,000 troops on board the King's ships, for his relief. With the addition of the reinforcement just brought by Admiral Digby, the fleet was stated to consist of 26 sail of the line, three of which were three-deckers. The 5th of October was emphatically mentioned as the time fixed upon for its sailing. Not doubting the faithful performance of this promise, Cornwallis turned his attention to every measure calculated to invigorate and prolong resistance. He abandoned his fortified camp in the night, and withdrew his troops within the immediate defences of the town. The next morning, the allied army took possession of the works thus relinquished by the British. In ascertaining the extent and situation of these works, the brave Lieutenant Colonel Seammell, of the Massachusetts line,

found an honourable, but lamented death. In a rencontre with a party of British dragoons, he was mortally wounded, and soon after expired.

CHAP.  
XIX.

The cavalry of the legion commanded by the Duke De Lauzun, had marched into Gloucester county, with a body of 1,200 militia, under Brigadier General Weedon. The infantry belonging to that legion debarked on the 23d, and with the Duke himself, proceeded to the same point; and on the day of the investment of York, the whole legion was re-united. To this corps were added a select battalion, headed by Lieutenant Colonel Mercer, and about 1000 French marines, under General De Choisy, who now took the command of the whole force on the Gloucester side, amounting to nearly 3,000 effectives. On the 3d of October, De Choisy, intending closely to invest the British post, advanced towards its front. Early in the morning of the same day, Dundas, reinforced the evening before by Tarleton with his legion, issued into the country for the purpose of foraging. From these simultaneous movements, a sharp skirmish resulted between the British legion, and the French cavalry, gallantly supported by Mercer's corps. In his orders of the 4th, General Washinton, justly bestowed great applause on Lauzun's horse, and Mercer's infantry, the only portion of the allied force engaged in that conflict. The British lost a Lieutenant and eleven privates. Three French hussars were killed—and 14 wounded, among whom three officers. De Choisy remained in possession of the ground; a rigorous blockade was established, and maintained to the end of the siege.

1781

October.

Skirmish  
between  
the British  
legion and  
the French  
cavalry.

The heavy ordnance intended for the operations against York, was landed on James river, at the distance of six miles from the American lines. This circumstance unavoidably delayed the beginning of the siege. On the night of the 6th of October, the first parallel was commenced, within 600 yards of the British defences. Such was the silence observed by the working detachment, that the besieged remained ignorant of what was going on, until the return of day. The trenches were then in such forwardness as nearly to cover the besiegers: the fire from the British batteries, though quick and well directed, was attended with inconsiderable effect. An officer and 20 men were its only victims. They mostly belonged to the corps of the Marquis De St. Simon, stationed on the left. Before the evening of the 9th, several redoubts and batteries were completed, and opened on the slender works of the enemy, a fire which they were ill calculated to sustain. In a few days, many of their guns were silenced, and most of their defences ruined. The shells and hot balls of the besiegers reached even the ships in the harbour. The Charon of 44 guns, and three large transports, were set on fire and entirely consumed.

October.



CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

The allies were sensible that extraordinary efforts would be made for the relief of Lord Cornwallis, and they did not wish to stake their hopes on the issue of a naval engagement. With emulous ardor, therefore, they prosecuted the labours of the siege, and the fire of their numerous batteries was kept up with equal constancy and vivacity. On the night of the 11th of October, their second parallel was opened, 300 yards nearer to the British works than the first, and with still greater secrecy and dispatch. The activity of the besieged seemed to increase with the dangers of their situation. They vied with each other in efforts to interrupt the progress of the American trenches, repaired their own works with indefatigable perseverance, opened new embrasures for guns, and poured an incessant fire from every howitzer and mortar they could man. No other period of the siege was so animated and so murderous. The allied troops, however, did not intermit their operations. Already several batteries began to shew themselves along the second parallel.

The principal annoyance which the besiegers experienced in their approaches, came from two redoubts in front of the enemy's defences, and nearly flanking the second parallel. These it was determined to storm at the same time. General Washington, availing himself of the noble rivalry which impelled the respective corps to deeds of emulous valour, committed the attack of the one to the Americans, and that of the other to the French. The Marquis De La Fayette commanded the American detachment destined to act against the first, and the Baron De Viomenil led against the second a party of French grenadiers and chasseurs. The van of the Americans was, on the evening of the 14th, led to the assault by Colonel Hamilton; and Colonel Laurens was detached, at the head of 80 men, to the rear of the redoubt, with a view to intercept the retreat of the Garrison. The advance of De Viomenil's detachment, in another quarter, was simultaneous.

The redoubt attacked by the Americans was on the left of the British. Major Campbell, with a few inferior officers and 45 privates, defended it. Impetuously rushing forward, Hamilton and his party, in a moment overcame every obstacle, and mastered the foe. Laurens personally took the commanding officer prisoner. The Garrison, except seven or eight, who unaccountably escaped, were either killed or taken. The laws of war would have justified the destruction of all the men in a redoubt thus carried by storm; and the late merciless carnage in Fort Griswold, seemed to call for stern retaliation. But "the Americans," Col. Hamilton observed in his report to General La Fayette,\* "were incapable of imitating examples

The Americans take two of the enemy's redoubts.

\* Gordon states, that La Fayette, with the assent of General Washington,

of barbarity, and forgetting recent provocation, the soldiery spared every man that ceased to resist." The killed of the enemy amounted only to eight. Nine of the assailants were slain, and 32 wounded.

By Major Barbour, one of his aids, La Fayette apprized the Baron De Viomenil of his success. The French sappers were then cutting down the palisades, and removing the abatis of the redoubt to be attacked. De Viomenil, in a loud voice proclaimed the triumph of the Americans, and directed his grenadiers to advance. Here resistance was greater. The redoubt was defended by a Lieutenant Colonel, with 120 men. Such, however, were the ardor and intrepidity of the assailants, that the redoubt was quickly carried. In killed and wounded, De Viomenil's loss amounted to nearly 100. Eighteen of the enemy were killed, and 42 made prisoners. The commandant escaped, with the rest of the Garrison.—Emulation extended to labour, as well as to military achievement. Before day light, the two redoubts taken from the enemy, were included in the second parallel. In the course of the next day, some howitzers were placed in them, and their fire turned on the besieged.

In the orders of that day, the Commander in Chief applauded, in very flattering terms, the judicious dispositions, and gallant conduct of La Fayette and Viomenil, as well as the spirit and firmness of the officers and men engaged in the double attack. He thus concluded this military homage: "The General reflects with the highest degree of pleasure on the confidence which the troops of the two nations must hereafter have in each other. Assured of mutual support, he is convinced there is no danger they will not cheerfully encounter; no difficulty which they will not bravely overcome."

By the taking of these two redoubts, the fate of Cornwallis was in reality decided. In a letter which he then wrote to Sir Henry Clinton, he represented his situation as so desperate, that the fleet and army ought not to run any extraordinary hazard for his relief. Nearly all his guns were silenced; the old batteries of the besiegers alone, were able to complete his ruin; and those of their second parallel would soon be ready to play on his half demolished works. In this crisis, he attempted, at least, to procrastinate the

---

ordered every man in the redoubt to be put to the sword, after the surrender. Although the irritation, for the late barbarities of the enemy in Connecticut, was keen and deep, yet such order never was given, nor of course approved. Colonel Hamilton has positively contradicted the fact; and Chief Justice Marshall, who sedulously examined General Washington's papers to ascertain this point, found no vestige of the alledged order. Washington and La Fayette always united humanity with courage. They always opposed unnecessary effusion of blood.

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

October 16.

October.  
Cornwallis  
attempts to  
escape on  
the side of  
Gloucester,

expected catastrophe. Against two batteries in the second parallel, which were now nearly finished, and the effect of which must prove decisive, a sortie of three hundred and fifty men, under Lieutenant Colonel Abercrombie, was directed. Abercrombie formed this party into two detachments, which, sallying forth a little before day-break, carried both batteries with very little loss; but this success was momentary; the guards from the trenches soon drove back the enemy to their lines; the cannon hastily spiked was again rendered serviceable; and such was the industry of the combined troops, that, towards the close of the afternoon, the whole parallel and the batteries were completed, so as to threaten the British works with utter ruin on the succeeding day. No part of the whole hostile front could now shew a single gun; and scarcely any shells remained in the besieged place.

In this extremity, Lord Cornwallis formed the bold, but hopeless design to attempt an escape on the Gloucester side. His intention was to abandon his baggage, and leave behind a detachment to capitulate for the loyalists and the sick and wounded. Already he had prepared a letter for General Washington on that subject. Lieutenant Colonel Johnson was selected to manage the intended capitulation. Cornwallis himself contemplated to cross over to Gloucester Point, in the course of the night, with the flower of his army. Before break of day, De Choisy's blockading corps was to be attacked by the whole British force. Cornwallis confidently relied on the defeat of that corps. Seizing on the horses of the French cavalry, he would be enabled to mount part of his troops, and to accelerate his retreat. Other horses would be collected on the route, and the whole British infantry ultimately mounted. Moving with rapidity, and leaving his destination uncertain, until he came opposite to the fords of the great rivers, he intended suddenly to shape his course to the Northward, in the expectation that the efforts made to intercept him would chiefly be towards the South. He would then force his way to New-York, through Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the Jerseys. The conception was great; but its issue, depending on a multitude of remote and abrupt contingencies, was highly problematical. Yet, a ray of hope illumined the prospect; whereas, on the side of York, all was alarming and gloomy. Cornwallis, therefore, did not hesitate in grasping this last resource; but fortune had determined that York should witness the grand Catastrophe of the war.

Under various pretences, boats were prepared, whose real destination was to receive the troops at ten o'clock at night, in order to convey them over to Gloucester Point. The necessary arrangements were made with the utmost secrecy; and, at the appointed hour, the light infantry, the



greatest part of the guards, and part of the 23rd regiment, were embarked, and put in motion for the Gloucester side, when the weather, hitherto moderate and calm, suddenly changed to a violent storm. Some of the boats safely reached the intended point; the rest were driven by the fury of the wind, considerably below the town. The force of Cornwallis was now divided, and his meditated escape utterly impracticable. The whole forenoon was employed in collecting the dispersed boats, and bringing back the first division of the troops.

In the mean while, the new batteries of the besiegers had been opened, and acted with great force and effect. The British defences were rapidly sinking under their fire; and a few hours more evidently would render the place untenable. Sickness and fatigue had considerably weakened the garrison: no hope of timely succour remained; and an assault, the success of which was not doubtful in the present posture of things, must be hourly expected, unless anticipated by a prompt surrender. Lord Cornwallis, accordingly beat a parley, about ten in the forenoon,\* and proposed a cessation of hostilities for 24 hours. Commissioners appointed by each side were to meet at Mr. Moore's house, in the rear of the first parallel, and settle terms for the surrender of the posts of York and Gloucester. To this proposal the Commander in Chief immediately answered that "an ardent desire to save the effusion of human blood, would readily incline him to listen to such terms for the proposed surrender, as were admissible." General reflections on the contingencies of war, and the obvious policy of promptitude and decision in the present crisis, induced Washington to grant only "a suspension of hostilities for two hours, previous to the meeting of the commissioners, during which the proposals of his Lordship might be transmitted in writing." In his reply, Cornwallis proposed a basis which did not appear calculated to create much difficulty, or delay: and the suspension of hostilities was prolonged for the night. Washington, the next morning, proposed such terms as he was willing to grant—Commissioners were immediately appointed to throw them into the usual form. These were, on the part of the allies, the Viscount De Noailles and Lieutenant Colonel Laurens;† and, on the side of the British, Colonel Dundas and Major Ross. The Commissioners met; but could not agree definitively on the terms of the capitulation. A rough

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

But cannot  
succeed,

October 17.

18.

And is com-  
pelled to  
surrender  
with his  
whole Army.

\* Four years before, on the 17th of October, also, Burgoyne had surrendered his army at Saratoga.

† It is a remarkable circumstance, that, while Colonel Laurens was thus drawing up the articles of a capitulation, by which a large British army became prisoners, his father was confined in the Tower of London.

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

October.

draught only was, therefore, prepared, to be submitted to the respective Generals. Impatient of a delay which might prove fatal, Washington caused this draught to be fairly transcribed, and, early in the morning of the 19th, sent it to Lord Cornwallis, with a letter expressing his expectation that the articles, such as they stood, should be signed by eleven, and that the troops to be surrendered would lay down their arms at two in the afternoon. Sensible that further contention would be fruitless, Lord Cornwallis immediately signified his ultimate assent.

The whole surrender was made to the combined forces of America and France. The land troops, the artillery, arms, accoutrements, military chest, and public stores of every denomination, were surrendered to General Washington; the ships, seamen, and marines to Admiral De Grasse. The soldiers, accompanied by a due proportion of their officers, were to remain in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. The general, staff and other officers not appointed to remain with the troops, were permitted to go on parole to Europe, to New-York, or any other British maritime port. Strenuous were the efforts of Lord Cornwallis to obtain that the British army should be sent to Europe, on condition of not serving either against France or America, until exchanged. This was peremptorily refused. Another point for which the British General warmly contended, but in contending for which he was equally unsuccessful, was, the security of such Americans as had joined the British Standard. With this subject, properly belonging to the civil authority, the Commander in Chief forbore to interfere. A stipulation was, however, made, which enabled Lord Cornwallis to extricate those loyalists who were most obnoxious to their countrymen, and would have been exposed to imminent danger. It was agreed that the Bonnetta sloop of war, which was to carry dispatches to New-York, should be allowed to pass unexamined, and an asylum was thus provided for those culpable, but unfortunate persons.

Beside a numerous captive army, a large train of artillery, mostly of brass, together with an immense quantity of arms, ammunition, warlike stores, and provisions, fell into the hands of the conquerors. To the French, one frigate, two ships of war of twenty guns, several transports and other vessels, were surrendered. Officers were allowed to retain their side arms. Both officers and soldiers remained in possession of their baggage and effects; but all property taken in the country, and found in the hands of the garrison, was liable to be reclaimed.

With a retrospective eye to the capitulation of Charleston, the Commander in Chief demanded that the garrison should advance from the town with colours uncased, and drums beating either a British or a German march; and

General Lincoln was selected to preside over the ceremony of the British troops, grounding their arms. This was performed at two o'clock, on the 19th. Cornwallis, though he had forfeited no part of his character as an able and brave commander, felt too deeply humbled and mortified, to appear before his conquerors. He secreted himself from their view; and the captive army came out of York, led by General O'Hara. On one side of the road, was General Washington, surrounded by his staff; on the other, Count De Rochambeau, with a similar retinue. O'Hara mistook the Count for the American Commander in Chief; but soon perceiving his error, respectfully turned to Washington, apologized for his mistake, and for the absence of Cornwallis; and requested his further orders. With soldier like courtesy, the American Chief relieved his embarrassment, and referred him to General Lincoln, to whom the rest of the ceremony had been assigned.\*

The post on the Gloucester side was surrendered nearly at the same time. Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton had lately assumed the command of that post, Dundas having been found necessary on the South side of the river. Whether an accusing consciousness of the sanguinary enormities of his corps, enormities in which he had himself but too conspicuously participated, secretly agitated Tarleton's mind; whether his alarms had been excited by information which the general temper of the country did not authorize; the commander of the British Legion, before the surrender, waited on General De Choisy, and imparted to him the apprehensions which he had been taught to entertain for his personal safety, should he be placed in the power of the American militia. He accordingly requested efficient protection against those outrages which he erroneously anticipated. To this request, De Choisy readily assented. The legion of the Duke De Lauzun, and Mercer's corps, were selected to receive Tarleton's submission, and the residue of the allied detachment did not even witness the scene. The character of Tarleton was, no doubt, calculated to call forth indignant feelings: but the Virginia militia deeply and habitually respected the laws of humanity and the rules of civilized war. To evince the courteous and liberal spirit of the allies, and their generosity towards their prisoners, it is sufficient to read what Lord Cornwallis himself wrote soon after to Sir Henry Clinton: "the

* Total of prisoners,	7,073,	BESIEGERS.		
Rank and file, - - -	5,963,	Continental, - - -	-	5,500
Fit for duty, - - -	4,017,	French, - - -	-	7,000
Killed, wounded, prisoners	} 552,	Militia, - - -	-	3,500
and missing, during the				
siege,				
Guns, 106, of which 75 were brass,		Killed and wounded during	}	300
		the siege, about		



CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

treatment in general, says his Lordship, that we have received from the enemy, since our surrender, has been perfectly good and proper; but the kindness, and attention that have been shewn to us by the French officers in particular, their delicate sensibility of our situation, their generous and pressing offers of money, both public and private, to any amount, has really gone beyond what I can possibly describe, and will, I hope, make an impression on the breast of every British officer, whenever the fortune of war should put any of them into our power."—An event so important in itself, and likely to be attended with effects so decisively beneficial, excited in every breast, emotions of lively joy and of deep gratitude towards a benign providence, and towards those who, under that providence, had been instrumental in capturing a formidable hostile army, and, it was hoped, in determining, by that means, the fate of a long, difficult, and fluctuating war, for the objects dearest and most valuable to individuals and to nations, *liberty and independence*. The Commander in Chief, in his orders of the 20th, congratulated the army on the glorious issue of the siege.—Adverting to the numerous and powerful fleet, and to the gallant and chosen troops, sent by France to co-operate with the defenders of America, he represented them as convincing pledges of the friendship of his most Christian Majesty to the United States, and added: "it is owing to that assistance that we have obtained so signal a victory as the present." To Count De Rochambeau for his counsel and aid; to the Baron De Viomenil, the Chevalier De Chastellux, the Marquis De St. Simon, the Count De Viomenil, and the Brigadier General De Choisy, for the gallant manner in which they had promoted the interest of the common cause, the Commander in Chief returned his warmest acknowledgements. The troops under the command of Rochambeau, largely shared in the applause which he bestowed on the whole army. The regiments of Agenois and Duexponts were presented with the two pieces of artillery taken by them in the redoubt which they had stormed on the 14th. Major General Lincoln, De La Fayette, and Steuben, the General of the front gate, Colonel Carney, General Knox and Colonel D'Abbeville of the artillery, were mentioned in terms of highest and best merited praise. The brave and patriotic Nelson\* and his

---

\* The writer has often heard it related of Governor Nelson, that, during the siege, observing his house uninjured by the artillery of the American batteries, he enquired into the cause. A respect for his property, was assigned. Nelson, whose devotion to the common cause was ardent and unbounded, requested that the artillerists would not spare his house more than any other, especially as he knew it to be occupied by the principal Officers of the British army. Two pieces were accordingly pointed against it. The first shot went through the house, and killed two of a large

zealous and gallant militia, justly participated in the homage thus paid to the victorious army, whose fatigues and dangers they had emulously shared.—To spread the general joy in all hearts, Washington directed that those of the army, who were then held under arrest, should be pardoned, set at liberty, and re-annexed to their respective corps. With pious gratitude to the supreme ruler of events, whose controuling power he ever bore in mind, the Commander in Chief thus concluded: “Divine service shall be performed to-morrow in the different brigades and divisions. The Commander in Chief recommends to all the troops that are not upon duty to assist at it with a serious deportment, and that sensibility of heart, which the recollection of the surprising and particular interposition of providence in our favour, claims.”

The relief promised by Sir H. Clinton was so long delayed, as to render it totally unavailing. The fleet, consisting of 25 sail of the line, two 50 gun ships and 8 frigates, commanded by Admiral Digby, and having on board 7000 of the best British troops, headed by General Clinton himself, appeared off the Capes of Virginia on the 24th.—There intelligence was received of the fate of Lord Cornwallis. To ascertain this intelligence, originally vague and unsatisfactory, the British Admiral and Sir Henry continued near the entrance of the Chesapeake, until the 29th.—The French fleet, satisfied with the late important achievement, did not quit its secure station. The British armament therefore returned to New York, without even a skirmish.\*

Such was the issue of those operations in Virginia, which were to have been followed by a decisive campaign, by the conquest of all the Southern States! Vain expectation! Infatuated hope!—At York, was demonstrated the utter impracticability of subduing America. Cornwallis had been her most formidable enemy. His matchless activity, splendid talents, and enterprising spirit, threatened to overcome even the vigor and pertinacity of her resistance. His triumphant march over 400 miles on the sea-coast, and 200 miles to the westward, had spread a chill of apprehension, which did not, indeed, extinguish, but repressed, in some degree, the sacred flame of liberty, and the spirit of

---

company of Officers, then indulging in the pleasures of the table. Other balls soon dislodged the hostile tenants.

\* The letter which Lord Cornwallis wrote to Sir Henry Clinton, to acquaint him with his disaster, and in which he stated the causes of that disaster in such a manner as to inculcate the British Commander in Chief, who was evidently answerable, produced a difference between them, which was followed by an appeal to the public. Their letters, &c. have been collected into an interesting volume, under the title of “*Clinton and Cornwallis*”—to which the reader is referred.

CHAP.  
XIX.

1781

Importance  
of this e-  
vent.

national independence. The army under his command was undoubtedly brave, patient—admirably calculated for the object in view : unfortunately for its fame, and that of its leader, it was demoralized by the abominable principles of devastation and rapine, which the British Commissioners had sanctioned and proclaimed. Although Cornwallis occasionally restrained the licentiousness of the soldiery and of the British Legion in particular, when it broke in to outrages, too shocking even to be named, the progress of his troops was often marked\* “ with circumstances disgraceful to the arms of any enlightened people ; with blood wantonly spilt ; executions, unwarranted even by military regulations ; indiscriminate plunder of the property, and destruction of the habitations of the widow and the orphan.” His partiality to the sanguinary Tarleton, who does not seem to have cherished commensurate gratitude, probably led him to overlook, in many cases, those barbarities and other excesses, which it was his duty, and would have been his glory, to stigmatize and punish.

All America clearly perceived that the event at York was the most momentous and most decisive occurrence in the protracted course of the war ; and that the awful blow must, at length, convince Great Britain of the madness of persisting in an expensive contest, without any attainable object but those of revenge and cruelty. Accordingly, the capture of the British army under Lord Cornwallis diffused universal and unbounded joy through the American empire. The courage of the despondent was revived ; the activity of the zealous increased ; and unanimity again began to pervade the whole union. Warm and loud were the expressions of the popular feeling. The conquerors of Cornwallis, were hailed from all quarters as the Saviours of the country. To Washington, in particular, a glorious tribute of applause and gratitude, was offered. Pure, inexpressible, and truly worthy of a patriot hero, was the pleasure derived by the Commander in Chief, from the consciousness, that, while essentially serving the whole union, he had relieved his native State from the ravages of a cruel enemy, roaming at large in its bowels. Amid the universal acclaim of affection and confidence, which greeted his ear from all sides, he distinguished with sensibility, the grateful voice of Virginia. His countrymen shared his triumph, and he shared their happiness. Through the organ of Congress, the national gratitude was proclaimed in a still more solemn tone. The Commander in Chief,

---

\* See Ramsay's South Carolina, vol. II. page 331.—Very properly, however, did Congress reject the motion of A. Middleton, for depriving Lord Cornwallis of the benefit of an exchange. Independently of positive stipulations, an exalted sense of national dignity suggested the course which was adopted.



the Count de Rochambeau, the Count De Grasse, all the commanding and other Officers of the army, and the troops themselves, particularly the corps of artillery and engineers, were honored with the thanks of that venerable body. They presented to General Washington two of the British standards ; The Counts De Rochambeau and De Grasse were complimented each with two of the field-pieces taken from the enemy.\* It was determined to erect at York a marble column, with emblems of the alliance between His Most Christian Majesty and the United States, and an inscription commemorative of the triumph of the combined forces. The 30th of December was fixed upon as a day of supplication and thanks giving to smiling Heaven ; but national piety anticipated that day by many a religious tribute.

In the plan of his operations in the South, General Washington had embraced the expulsion of the British, not only from Virginia, but also from the Carolinas and Georgia. With similar views, General Greene had sent to York Lieutenant Colonel Lee, to urge the co-operation of the French Admiral, and of the combined forces further South. No sooner was the capture of the British army under Cornwallis accomplished, than General Washington communicated to Count De Grasse this part of his extensive plan, and requested the aid of the French fleet, especially against Charleston. Unfortunately, the instructions and engagements of the Count, rendered his longer stay on the American coast, impracticable. Reluctantly did he leave a theatre which promised to his personal fame additional splendour, and to the common cause decisive benefit. He found it impossible even to transport to Wilmington a detachment of 2,000 Americans, intended to wrest that place from the possession of Major Craig, and to march thence to General Greene's Head Quarters. He, however, continued a few days longer in the Bay, to cover the transportation of the Eastern troops and of the ordnance to the head of Elk. General Lincoln was appointed to the command of those troops, and instructed to canton them for the winter, in the States of New Jersey and New York. The army of Rochambeau was stationed in Virginia, ready to proceed either Northwardly or Southwardly, as the exigencies of the next campaign might require. The discipline, the regularity, and good conduct of these gallant troops, either in their various marches or in their several cantonments, have been warmly eulogized by the histori-

Part of the  
American  
army re-  
treats to the  
North.

\* Two Aids-de-Camp of Gen. Washington, Col. T. Tilghman and Col. Humphreys, were presented, the first with a horse and a sword ; the second, with a sword only. Col. Gouvion, and Capt. Rochefontaine, were each advanced a grade by brevet. Brigadiers General Duportail, and Knox were named Majors General.

**CHAP.  
XIX.**

---

**1781**

Rocham-  
beau en-  
camps in  
Virginia,

De Grasse  
sails for the  
West Indies

And La Fay-  
ette returns  
to Europe.

ans of those times. "It seldom, if ever, happened before," says Ramsay, "that an army led through a foreign coun-  
try, at so considerable a distance from their own, among  
" a people of different principles, customs, language and  
" religion, behaved with so much regularity. To the ho-  
" nour of the officers and soldiers of the French army, it  
" must be acknowledged that, in the space of three years,  
" through various parts of the United States, there never  
" was a complaint brought against them by the citizens.  
" The utmost harmony prevailed both between the allied  
" armies, the troops of His Most Christian Majesty, and  
" the inhabitants. Nations long accustomed to the freest  
" social intercourse, could not have been on a more friend-  
" ly footing, than the French and Americans, though a few  
" years before they had been in the habit of reviling, ha-  
" ting and fighting with each other."—Admiral De Grasse  
sailed for the West-Indies, and General Washington, bent  
on the termination of the war by invigorating its sinews,  
repaired to Philadelphia, to concert with Congress, the plan  
of the ensuing campaign. The Marquis De La Fayette,  
encircled with glory, and followed by the affection and  
good wishes of a virtuous people, whose cause he had so  
nobly espoused, and so efficiently served, returned to Eu-  
rope, where his influence continued to be zealously and  
successfully exerted for the interest of America. He had  
been the hero of liberty in the Western world; he was  
doomed to be its martyr in the Eastern hemisphere—in  
both possessing the admiration and the sympathy of  
mankind.

# APPENDIX.

---

## [ No. 1. ]

*Copy of Lord Dunmore's orders, to the Militia Captains.*

It being requisite to raise a body of men in this county, for the immediate protection of the lives and properties of His Majesty's loyal subjects, inhabitants thereof, now exposed to the lawless violence of those who are meditating their destruction, and that of the most excellent Constitution, under which they have hitherto enjoyed the most perfect tranquility ; I require of you, therefore, to call together at the most convenient place, the Company of Militia under your command, on Monday the 27th inst. and draught out of it 15 young men, or more, capable to bear arms, to serve as soldiers for six months, and send them with a list of their names, to me in Norfolk, on or before Wednesday next following. And, although this measure is adopted merely for their own defence, I am willing, for the encouragement of such persons, to allow them the same pay and provisions which His Majesty's troops now have, with one guinea and a crown bounty-money, in hand paid to them ; and good clothing, viz—a coat, waistcoat, breeches and a hat, which you are hereby authorised to assure them of. Being also desirous to study the inclinations, together with the interests of the people under my government, you are desired to return me the names of such persons as you think are proper to serve as Officers, and are agreeable to the persons they are to command—Given under my hand on board the William, the 24th day of November, 1775.

To Captain ———. In his absence to his Lieutenant.

---

## [ No. 2. ]

*A copy of the Oath, extorted from the People of Norfolk and Princess-Anne by Lord Dunmore.*

We, the inhabitants of ———, being fully sensible of the errors and guilt into which this Colony has been misled, under colour of seeking redress of grievances, and that a set of factious men, styling themselves Committees, Conventions and Congresses, have violently, and under various pretences usurped the Legislative and Executive powers of government, and are thereby endeavoring to overturn our most happy Constitution, and have incurred the guilt of actual rebellion against our most Gracious Sovereign : We have therefore, taken an Oath, abjuring their authority, and solemnly promising, in the presence of Almighty God, to bear faith and true allegiance to his sacred Majesty, George III ; and that we will, to the utmost of our power and ability, support, maintain and defend his crown and dignity, against all traitorous attempts and conspiracies whatever.— And whereas armed bodies of men are collected, in various parts of this Colony, without any legal authority, we wish them to be informed, that however unwilling we should be to shed the blood of our countrymen, we must, in discharge of our duty to God and the King, and in support of the Constitution and laws of our country, oppose their marching into this county, where their coming can answer no good end, but, on the contrary, must expose us to the ravages and horrors of a civil war ; and for that purpose, we are determined to take advantage of our happy situation, and will defend the passes into our county and neighborhood, to the last drop of our blood.

---

## [ No. 3. ]

*Instructions given by the Committee of Safety, to Col. Woodford.*

SIR—With your regiment, and the 5 companies of minute-men, from

APPENDIX.

---



APPENDIX.

the Culpepper battalion, you are to march towards Norfolk; and when you have informed yourself of all necessary circumstances, by enquiry of Colonel Hutchings and other gentlemen in whom you can place confidence, you will fix on an encampment, having regard among other things, to the convenience of winter-quarters, which the approaching season makes necessary, and which we have appointed Colonel Hutchings, Mr. Mathew Godwin, Mr. James Nicholson and Mr. James Marsden, a Committee to provide for you.

Two companies of minute men, formerly taken into pay, one under the command of Captain Josiah Parker, stationed at Smithfield, and the other under the command of Captain Mathews, now of his Lieutenant, stationed at Kemp's Landing, you will also take under your command, and direct their operations, continuing their present stations, or changing them, as to you shall seem most convenient. You have also power to call in the further aid of any companies of minute-men or militia, which the exigency of affairs may, in your judgment, render necessary, giving notice thereof to the Committee of Safety, and the commanding Officer at Williamsburg, as the ordinance of Convention directs.

You are to use your best endeavors for protecting and defending the persons and properties of all friends to the cause of America, and to this end, to attack, kill, or captivate all such as you shall discover to be in arms for the annoying of those persons, as far as you shall judge it prudent to engage them.

You will use every means in your power for stopping all communication of intelligence and supplies of provisions, to the enemies of America in Norfolk or Portsmouth, and suffer no persons to pass and repass thither, whom, upon examination, you shall suspect to be inimical: more particularly you shall stop and detain all slaves, who may so attempt to pass; if in arms, to proceed against them according to the rules of war, otherwise to send them to their masters being our friends, or dispose of them as prudence may direct.

There may be many persons in those towns, or near them, who may be afraid in their present situation, exposed to the vengeance of the Navy, to declare their real sentiments. We think, therefore, that all those who will continue peaceable, giving no assistance or intelligence to our enemies, nor attempting to annoy your troops, or injure our friends, may for the present remain unmolested; those Tories and others who take an active part against us, must be considered as enemies; your own humanity and discretion will, however, prevent the wanton damage or destruction of any person's property whatsoever.

It is impossible, and as we repose great confidence in your judgment and discretion, unnecessary, to point out the particulars of your conduct; in general, we wish you to be attentive to the force and motions of the enemy, and act offensively or defensively, as your prudence may direct for the good of the common cause we are engaged in, giving intelligence by express, from time to time, to the Committee of Safety and the commanding Officer here, of such things as to you shall appear necessary to be communicated.

Recommending you, your brave troops, and righteous cause to divine favor, we are, sir, your obedient servants,

<i>Edm'd Pendleton,</i>	<i>W. Cabell,</i>
<i>John Page,</i>	<i>Carter Braxton,</i>
<i>Richard Bland,</i>	<i>John Tabb.</i>
<i>Dudley Digges,</i>	

[ No. 4. ]

*Examination of Connelly and his Companions.*

FREDERICK-TOWN, MARYLAND,

*In Committee-Chamber, November 23, 1775.*

Allen Cameron, Dr. John Smith and John Connelly, being taken into custody, were brought before the Committee, and the following examinations were taken:

Allen Cameron, a native of Scotland, which he left for an affair of honor, came to Virginia with an intention to purchase back lands, and intended to go to Henderson's for that purpose; but finding it difficult to go through

the back country—Encouraged by Lord Dunmore, and promises of advancement, he agreed to accept a commission as first Lieutenant in the regiment to be raised by Lieutenant-Colonel Connelly.

Dr. John Smith, a native of Scotland, left Charles county, Maryland, for political reasons, and intended to go to the Mississippi; but finding it impracticable, he went to Norfolk, and being induced by Lord Dunmore with promises of preferment, he accepted the appointment of Surgeon to Colonel Connelly's regiment.

John Connelly, a native of Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, admits his letter to Gibson (copy shewn him.) He went, the 25th July, from Fort Dunmore to Lord Dunmore, and delivered him proposals, in substance the same with the one found in his possession, and in his hand writing; that he was sent by Lord Dunmore to General Gage with letters, and his proposals enclosed to Gage; that he left Boston on the 14th or 15th of September, and returned to Lord Dunmore in the middle of October; that he brought instructions from General Gage to Lord Dunmore, who granted him a commission of Lieut. Col. Commandant of a regiment, to be raised in the back parts and Canada, with power to nominate officers, who were to be commissioned by Lord Dunmore; that he is now on his way to Detroit, where he was to meet his commission and instructions; that he left Lord Dunmore about 10 days ago, who had with him two sloops of 16 and 18 guns; that the ship on which Lord Dunmore is aboard, is armed with about 6 or 8 guns; that a vessel of 20 guns is daily expected from Jamaica; that John Smith never was appointed Surgeon; that he told Smith that if he was the man he represented himself to be, it was possible he would appoint him.

(A True Copy.)

*Resolved*, That the said Allen Cameron and John Connelly, be kept in close and safe custody, until the orders of the Congress be known; and that the Chairman transmit copies of the examinations and papers, to the Honourable the President of the Congress, and to the Conventions or Councils of Safety of the Colony of Virginia and this Province.

*Resolved*, That Dr. John Smith, be kept in custody till the farther orders of this Committee.

(A true copy from the Minutes.)

### [ No 5. ]

*Letter from General George Washington, to Colonel William Woodford.*

CAMBRIDGE, 10th NOVEMBER, 1775.

Dear Sir—Your favour of the 18th of September came to my hands on Wednesday last, through Boston, and open, as you may suppose. It might be well to recollect by whom you sent it, in order to discover if there has not been some treachery practised.

I do not mean to flatter, when I assure you that I highly approve of your appointment.—The inexperience you complain of is a common case, and only to be remedied by practice and close attention.—The best general advice I can give, and which I am sure you stand in no need of, is to be strict in your discipline; that is, to require nothing unreasonable of your officers and men, but see that whatever is required be punctually complied with—reward and punish every man according to his merit, without partiality or prejudice.—Hear their complaints—if well founded, redress them.—If otherwise, discourage them, in order to prevent frivolous ones.—Discourage vice in every shape, and impress upon the mind of every man, from the first to the lowest, the importance of the cause; and what it is they are contending for.—Forever keep in view the necessity of guarding against surprizes.—In all your marches, at times, at least, even when there is no possible danger, to move with front, rear, and flank guards, that they may be familiarized to the use; and be regular in your encampments, appointing necessary guards for the security of your camp. In short, whether you expect an enemy or not, this should be practised; otherwise your attempts will be confused and awkward, when necessary. Be plain and precise in your orders, and keep copies of them to refer to, that no mistakes may happen.—Be easy and condescending in your deportment to your officers, but not too familiar, lest you subject yourself to a want of that respect which is necessary to support a proper command.—These, sir, not because I think you need the advice, but because you have been

**APPENDIX.** condescending enough to ask it, I have presumed to give as the great outlines of your conduct.

As to the manual exercise, the evolutions, manœuvres, &c. of a regiment, with other knowledge necessary to the soldier, you will acquire them from those authors who have treated upon these subjects, among which Bland (the newest edition) stands foremost—essay on the art of war—instructions for officers (lately published at Philadelphia)—the Partizan—Young, &c.

My compliments to Mrs. Woodford—and that every success may attend you in this glorious struggle, is the sincere and ardent wish of,

Dear Sir, your affectionate humble servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

[ No. 6. ]

*Extract of a letter from Edmund Pendleton, President of the Convention, to Colonel William Woodford,*

RICHMOND, DECEMBER 1st, 1775.

SIR—The convention have had under consideration your letter to Mr. Page, with that of Lieutenant Colonel Scott to you, which contain the situation of your troops, and that of Lord Dunmore, and his motley auxiliaries. They have honoured me with their commands to communicate *their wishes to you, to risk the success of your arms as little as possible, at this important crisis*; and if your numbers do not, in your judgment, give a moral probability of answering the purposes of your march, they desire you will accept the offer of the troops of North-Carolina, by sending for their immediate assistance. A counter-proclamation, &c. &c.

I am, &c.

EDMUND PENDLETON, *President.*

[ No. 7. ]

Wells, on his return from North Carolina, brought from Col. Vail, a letter, containing the following information:

That he had with him about 190 effective men, well prepared with small arms and cartridges; three double fortified 4 pounders, and 4 cannon of a smaller size, and about 25 or 30 balls for the 4 pounders; one or two hundred more at Edenton, for which he had sent to Colonel Howe, by whom he expected to be joined the latter end of the week, with 500 men; he was uncertain whether he should be able to bring with him more than 2 of the four-pounders, and 1 of the smaller size; carts were difficult to be procured, but if possible, Woodford might depend upon being joined by the whole—this junction should take place as soon as they could get along—the cannon belonging to the Carolina troops were not mounted, and they had no powder with them, but expected to receive 300 lbs; the men's arms were indifferent—there was no kind of furniture to the cannon.

[ No. 8. ]

Tuesday, December 12, 1775.

*Resolved unanimously*, That this Convention do highly approve of Colonel Woodford's conduct, manifested as well in the success of the troops under his command, as in the humane treatment of, and kind attention to the unfortunate, though brave officers and soldiers, who were made prisoners in the late action near the Great Bridge; and that the President communicate to Colonel Woodford, the sense of this county on this occasion.

[ No. 9. ]

*Inventory of Arms, taken Saturday, 9th December, 1775.*

Two silver mounted Fuzees with bayonets; one steel mounted Fuzee



without bayonet; 24 well fixed muskets with bayonets; 28 cartouch boxes and pouches; 3 silver mounted cartouch boxes; 2 common ditto; 26 bayonet-belts; 27 caps; 2 hats; 1 barrel with powder and cartridges; 1 silk handkerchief with linnen in it; 2 watches; cash 12s 6d; 1 pair of gloves; 4 stocks and buckles; 1 pair of silver shoe buckles; 3 pair ditto knee ditto; 2 snuff boxes; 10 knives; 1 barrel with ball and oakum; 12 coats; 12 waistcoats; 11 pair of shoes; 12 pair of garters, 1 pair of breeches; 1 shirt; 1 pair of stockings; a parcel of old knee buckles; 1 black handkerchief.

#### LIST OF STORES FOUND IN THE FORT.

7 guns, 4 of which indifferent; 1 bayonet; 29 spades; 2 shovels; 6 cannon; a few shot; some bedding; part of a hog'shead of rum; 2 or more barrels, contents unknown, supposed to be rum; 2 barrels of bread; about 20 quarters of beef; about a box and a half of candles; 4 or 5 dozen qt. bottles; 4 or 5 iron pots; a few axes; some old lumber.

N. B.—The spikes cannot be got out of the cannon, without drilling.

#### [ No. 10. ]

The circumstance which occasioned the delay alluded to, was this:—A direction from the Convention to Woodford, to endeavor to procure an exchange of prisoners, was, in the bustle and hurry of the moment, mistaken for an instruction from the Committee of Safety; so that when Dunmore's proposal came, it was still deemed necessary to refer it to the Convention.

#### [ No. 11. ]

*To the Right Honorable army, entitled the Sons of Liberty and Property, in and over the Colony and Dominion of Virginia.*

The petition of upwards of 250 neutrals, who lately arrived from Scotland, and bound to Cape Fear in North Carolina; and by distress of weather was forced in Cape Henry, and arrived in Norfolk in the ship Lord Donluce, Capt. Robert Shutter, commander; and now lying in said Borough with their wives and children, in distress, and not being acquainted with the art of war, are all now lying in a desperate situation, and must all certainly suffer, unless relieved by your honorable protection—

Therefore, Your petitioners humbly craveth your protection, that they may arrive safe to Cape Fear, by land, or any other way, as your honour shall think proper—and with so doing, your poor petitioners shall, as in duty bound, ever pray, &c.

#### [ No. 12. Vide page 134. ]

The following are extracts from letters tending to prove that the American declaration of Independence was the effect of ministerial oppression, and not the result of a preconcerted plan. Though intended for the bosom of private friendship, those letters may legitimately be considered as conveying the sentiments of the whole American people at that time. They evidence the reluctance with which a separation from Great Britain was contemplated; and do away the idea held out by some English writers, that "Independence had long been meditated by the leading characters in the Colonies, and that they availed themselves of the obnoxious acts of the British Government for its assertion."

Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to Dr. William Small, formerly one of the professors of William and Mary, but then at Birmingham, in England, where he successfully applied his extensive scientific knowledge to practical improvements, in various manufactures, &c. dated May 7th, 1775, writes as follows:

"Within this week, we have received the unhappy news of an action of considerable magnitude between the King's troops and our brethren of

## APPENDIX.

Boston, in which it is said 500 of the former, with the Earl of Piercy, are slain. That such an action has happened is undoubted, though, perhaps the circumstances may not yet have reached us with truth. This accident has cut off our last *hopes of reconciliation*, and a phrenzy of revenge seems to have seized all ranks of people.—It is a lamentable circumstance that the only mediatory power acknowledged by both parties, instead of leading to a reconciliation, his divided people, should pursue the incendiary purpose of still blowing up the flames, as we find him constantly doing, in every speech and public declaration. This may, perhaps, be intended to intimidate into acquiescence; but the effect has been most unfortunately otherwise. A little knowledge of human nature, and attention to its ordinary workings, might have foreseen that the spirits of the people were in a state, in which they were more likely to be provoked than frightened by haughty deportment and to fill up the measure of irritation. Proscription of individuals has been substituted in the room of just trial. Can it be believed that a grateful people will suffer those to be consigned to execution, whose sole crime has been developing and asserting their rights? Had the Parliament possessed the liberty of reflection, they would have avoided a measure as impotent as it was inflammatory. When I saw Lord Chatham's bill, I entertained high hopes that a reconciliation could have been brought about. The difference between his terms, and those offered by our Congress, might have been accommodated, if entered on by both parties with a disposition to accommodate; but the indignity of Parliament, it seems, can brook no opposition to its power.—Strange, that a set of men who have made sale of their virtue to the minister, should yet talk of retaining dignity!”

Another letter, from the same gentleman to John Randolph, the former Attorney General, dated August 25th, 1775, contains the annexed passage:

“I am sorry the situation of our country should render it not eligible to you to remain longer in it. I hope the returning wisdom of Great Britain will ere long put an end to this unnatural contest. There may be people to whose tempers and dispositions contention may be pleasing, and who may therefore wish a continuance of confusion; but to me it is of all states but one, the most horrid. My first wish is a restoration of our just rights; my second a return of the happy period when, consistently with duty, I may withdraw myself totally from the public eye, and pass the rest of my days in domestic ease and tranquility, banishing every desire of afterwards even hearing what passes in the world. Perhaps, ardour for the latter adds considerably to the warmth of the former wish. Looking with fondness towards a reconciliation with Great Britain, I cannot help hoping you may be able to contribute towards expediting this good work. I think it must be evident to yourself that the ministry have been deceived by their officers on this side the water, who (for what purposes I cannot tell) have constantly represented the American opposition as that of a small faction, in which the body of the people took little part. This you can inform them, of your own knowledge, to be untrue. They have taken it into their heads, too, that we are cowards and shall surrender at discretion to an armed force. The past and future operations of the war must confirm or undeceive them on that head. I wish they were thoroughly and minutely acquainted with every circumstance relative to America, as it exists in truth. I am persuaded this would go far towards disposing them to reconciliation. Even those in Parliament who are called friends to America, seem to know nothing of our real determinations. I observe they pronounced in the last Parliament that the Congress of 1774, did not mean to insist rigorously on the terms they held out, but kept something in reserve to give up, and, in fact, that they would give up every thing but the right of taxation. Now the truth is far from this, as I can affirm, and put my honour to the assertion. Their continuing in this error may, perhaps, have very ill consequences. The Congress stated the lowest terms they thought possible to be accepted, in order to convince the world they were not unreasonable. They gave up the monopoly and regulation of trade, and all acts passed prior to 1764, leaving to British generosity to render these, at some future time, as easy to America as the interest of Great Britain could admit. I wish no false sense of honour, no ignorance of our real intentions, no vain hope that partial concessions of right will be accepted, may induce the ministry to trifle with accommodation, till it shall be put even out of our own power to accommodate. If, indeed, Great Britain, disjoined from her Colonies, be a match for the most potent nations of Eu-

hope, with the Colonies thrown into their scale, they may go on securely ; but if they are not assured of this, it would be certainly unwise, by trying the event of another campaign, to risk our accepting a foreign aid, which, perhaps, may not be obtainable but on a condition of everlasting avulsion from Great Britain. This would be thought a hard condition to those who wish for re union with their parent country. I am sincerely one of those, and would rather be in dependence on Great Britain, properly limited, than on any nation upon earth, or than on no nation ; but I am one of those too who rather than submit to the right of legislating for us, assumed by the British Parliament, and which late experience\* has shewn they will so cruelly exercise, would lend my hand to sink the whole Island in the ocean.

If undeceiving the Minister as to matters of fact, may change his disposition, it will, perhaps, be in your power, by assisting to do this, to render service to the whole empire, at the most critical time, certainly, that it has ever seen. Whether Britain shall continue the head of the greatest empire on earth, or shall return to her original station in the political scale of Europe, depends perhaps on the resolutions of the succeeding winter. — God send they may be wise and salutary for us all !”

Again, in a letter dated Philadelphia, November 29, 1775, and addressed to the same John Randolph, Mr. Jefferson says :

“ ————— You will have heard before this reaches you, that Lord Dunmore has commenced hostilities in Virginia. The people bore with every thing, till he attempted to burn the town of Hampton. They opposed and repelled him with considerable loss on his side, and none on ours. It has roused our countrymen into perfect phrenzy. It is an immense misfortune to the whole empire, to have a King of such a disposition, at such a time. We are told, and every thing proves it true, that he is the bitterest enemy we have. His Minister is able, and that satisfies me that ignorance or wickedness some where controuls him. In an earlier part of this contest, our petitions told him, that from our King there was but one appeal. The admonition was despised, and that appeal forced on us. To undo his empire, he has but one truth more to learn, that after Colonies have drawn the sword, there is but one step more they can take. That step is now pressed upon us by the measures adopted, as if they were afraid we would not take it. Believe me, dear sir, there is not in the British empire, a man who more cordially loves a union with Great Britain, than I do ; but, by the God that made me, I will cease to exist, before I yield to a connexion on such terms as the British Parliament propose ; and in this I think I speak the sentiments of America. We want neither inducement nor power to declare and assert a separation from Great Britain. It is will

\* This is understood to have alluded to a bill, passed by the House of Lords at their preceding session, excepting from the benefit of any general pardon which might be offered, certain individuals by name. Mr. Montague, then Agent for the House of Burgesses of Virginia (which place was procured for him by the interest of Peyton Randolph, Speaker of the House, and his early and intimate friend) extracted the substance of the bill and the names excepted, and enclosed the extract to Peyton Randolph. Among the persons excepted, were Hancock and one or both Adams's, as notorious leaders of the opposition in Massachusetts, Patrick Henry as the same in Virginia ; Peyton Randolph, as President of the General Congress at Philadelphia ; and Thomas Jefferson, as author of a proposition to the Convention of Virginia for an address to the King, in which was maintained, that there was in right no link of union between England and the Colonies, but that of the same King ; and that neither the Parliament, nor any other functionary of that government, had any more right to exercise authority over the Colonies, than over the Electorate of Hanover ; yet expressing, in conclusion, an acquiescence in reasonable restrictions of commerce, for the benefit of Great Britain, a conviction of the mutual advantages of union, and disavowal of the wish for separation. The Convention, desiring to avoid what was unconciliatory, waved the consideration of the address in form, but the members individually, had it printed, Mr. Jefferson being prevented by sickness from attending the Convention. Several of the persons were excepted in the same bill ; but, about this time, information of occurrences in America presenting a serious aspect, the House of Commons never acted on the bill.



## APPENDIX.

alone which is wanting, and that is growing apace, under the fostering hand of our King—One bloody campaign will probably decide everlastingly, our future course. I am sorry to find a bloody campaign is decided on. If our winds and waters should not combine to rescue their shores from slavery, and General Howe's reinforcement should arrive in safety, we have hopes he will be inspired to come out of Boston, and take another drubbing; and we must drub him soundly, before the sceptered tyrant will know we are not mere brutes, to crouch under his hand, and kiss the rod with which he designs to scourge us."

## [ No. 13. ]

*Extract of a letter from Mr. Jefferson to Edmund Pendleton, on the subject of his resignation of his seat in Congress, after hearing of his re-appointment.*

"I am sorry the situation of my domestic affairs, renders it indispensably necessary that I should solicit the substitution of some other person here, in my room. The delicacy of the House will not require me to enter minutely into the private causes which render this necessary. I trust they will be satisfied I would not have urged it again, were it not unavoidable. I shall with cheerfulness continue in duty here till the expiration of our year—by which time I hope it will be convenient for my successor to attend."

On the 10th of October following, the General Assembly appointed Benjamin Harrison a Delegate to the Continental Congress, in the room of Mr. Jefferson. A high compliment was, at the same time bestowed on him, for his former conduct in the important trust to which he was recalled.

*See Journal of the House of Delegates of Virginia, Anno Domini, 1776—page, 8.*

## [ No. 14. ]

Several schemes were proposed for a new seal. We find, in our documents, the following, in Dr. Franklin's hand writing:

MOSES—standing on the shore and extending his hand over the sea, thereby causing the same to overwhelm Pharaoh, who is sitting in an open chariot, a crown on his head, and a sword in his hand. Rays, from a pillar of fire in the clouds, reaching to Moses, to express that he acts by the command of the Deity

*Motto*—Rebellion to Tyrants, in obedience to God.

Another Coat of Arms for Virginia, was devised by Mr. De Cimetiere of Philadelphia.

FIELD—a cross of St. George (as a remnant of the ancient Coat of Arms, shewing the origin of the Virginians to be English) having in the center a sharp pointed knife, in pale, blade argent, handle or, alluding to the name the Indians have given to that sea

In the first quarter argent, a tobacco plant fleur, proper.

In the second argent, two wheat sheaves in salt, proper.

In the third argent, a stalk of Indian corn, full ripe, proper.

In the fourth vest, four fasces waved argent, alluding to the 4 great rivers of Virginia.

N. B. The pieces contained in the above, may very well admit of a different disposition, if thought necessary, and more emblematical or heraldical.

SUPPORTERS—Dexter, a figure dressed as in the time of Queen Elizabeth, representing Sir Walter Raleigh, planting with his right hand the standard of Liberty; with the words *Magna Charta* written on it, and with his left supporting the escutcheon.

SINISTER—A Virginian rifleman of the present times, completely accoutred.

CREST—The crest of the ancient arms of Virginia—the breast of a Virgin naked, and crowned with an antique crown, alluding to Queen Elizabeth, in whose reign the country was discovered.

*Motto*—Rebellion to Tyrants in obedience to God;—or, *Rex est qui regem non habet.* (Suggested by Mr. Jefferson.)

(*Mr. Wuthe proposed the annexed—The figures from Spence's Polymetis.*)

VIRTUE, the genius of the Commonwealth, dressed like an Amazon, resting on a spear with one hand, and holding a sword with the other, and treading on Tyranny, represented by a man prostrate, a crown fallen from his head, a broken chain in his left hand, and a scourge in his right.

In the exergon, the word *Virginia*, over the head of *Virtus*; and underneath, *sic semper tyrannis*.

On the reverse, a group: *Libertas* with her wand and pileus, in the middle; on one side *Ceres*, with the Cornucopia, in one hand, and an ear of wheat in the other; on the other side, *Eternitas* with the *Globe* and *Phoenix*.

In the exergon, *Deus Nobis hæc otia fecit*.

On July 20th, Mr. John Page wrote thus to Mr. Thomas Jefferson:

"We are very much at a loss here, for an engraver to make our seal. Mr. Wythe and myself have, therefore, thought it proper to apply to you to assist in this business. Can you get the work done in Philadelphia? If you can, we must get the favor of you to have it done immediately. The enclosed will be all the directions you will require. The engraver may want to know the size. This you may determine; unless Mr. Wythe should direct the dimensions. He may also be at a loss for a *Virtus* and *Libertas*; but you may refer him to *Spence's Polymetis*, which must be in some Library in Philadelphia, &c. &c.

The delay which attended the execution of this new seal, caused a law to be passed by the first republican assembly, empowering the Governor to issue commissions, without the seal of the Commonwealth; and to confirm those already issued.

In October, 1779, an act was passed, for having the above engraved, either in America or Europe, only changing the motto on the reverse to *Perseverando*.—The present seal is generally known.

### [ No. 15. ]

27th of Edward III. Chap. XVII.

A merchant stranger, shall not be impeached for another's debt, but upon good cause, merchants of enemies countries sell their goods in convenient time, and depart.

Item—That no merchant stranger be impeached for another's trespass, or for another's debt, whereof he is not debtor, pledge or main person. Provided always, that if our liege people, merchants or others be endangered by any Lords of strange lands, or their subjects, and the said Lords duly required, fail of right to our said subjects, we shall have the law of Marque, and of taking them again, as has been used in times past, without fraud or deceit; and in case that debate do rise (which God defend) betwix us and any Lords of strange lands, we will not that the people and merchants of the said lands be suddenly subdued in our said realm and lands because of such debate, but that they be warned, and proclamation thereof published, that they shall void the said realm and Lands, with their goods, freely, within forty days after the warning, and proclamation so made; and that, in the mean time, they be not impeached, nor let of their passage, or of making their profit of the same merchandizes, if they will sell them. And in case that for default of wind or of ship, or for sickness, or for other evident cause, they cannot avoid our said realm and lands within so short a time, then they shall have other forty days, or more, if need be, within which they may pass conveniently, with selling their merchandize, as afore is said.

### [ No. 16. ]

"Treason," says Mr. John Adams, in a letter to Mr. Jefferson, dated, Philadelphia, May 26, 1777, "to bear that your battalions are so far fitted as to render a draught of the militia unnecessary. It is a dangerous measure, and only to be adopted in great extremities, even by popular governments. Perhaps, in such governments, draughts will never be made but in

**APPENDIX.** cases where the people themselves see the necessity of them. Such draughts are widely different from those made by monarchs, to carry on wars in which the people can see no interest of their own, nor any other object in view than the gratification of the avarice, ambition, caprice, envy, revenge, or vanity of a single tyrant. Draughts in the Massachusetts, as they have been there managed, have not been very unpopular; for, the persons draughted, are commonly the wealthiest, who become obliged to give large premiums to their poorer neighbours to take their places."

[ No. 17 ]

What these reports were, could not be precisely ascertained.

A letter from R. H. Lee, to Thomas Jefferson, dated, Philadelphia, Nov'r. 3, 1776, contains the following paragraph:

"I have been informed, that very malignant and very scandalous hints and insinuations concerning me, have been uttered in the house. From the justice of the house, I should expect they would not suffer the character of an absent person to be reviled by any slanderous tongue whatever. When I am present, I shall be perfectly satisfied with the justice I am able to do myself. From your candour, sir, and knowledge of my political movements, I hope such misstatements as may happen in your presence, will be rectified.

[ No. 18. ]

On one side of this medal, is the portrait of G. Gates, with these words: *Horatio Gates — Duci strenuo, comitia Americana.* On the reverse, Burgoyne is represented in the act of surrendering his sword to Gates. In the back ground are the two armies, American and British. Above, we read, *salus regimini septentrioni.* And under the figures, *Hoste ad Saratogam in deditionem accepto. Die, xvii Octobris, MDCCLXXVII.*

[ No. 19. ]

*Extract from the Journal of the House of Delegates, January 24th, 1778.*

Ordered, that the Clerk of the house do transmit a copy of the several papers, filed in the office, relating to the claim of Richard Henderson & company, and of the Indiana company, to George Mason and Thomas Jefferson, Esqrs.

Whereas, it is of the greatest importance to this commonwealth, that the waste and unappropriated lands, to which no person having just claim, should be disposed for the purpose of creating a sinking fund, in aid of the taxes for discharging the public debt, and to the end that the claims to unpatented lands, under the former or present government, may not in the mean time be increased or strengthened.

*Resolved,* That every entry with the country surveyor, or survey hereafter made in the country, upon the *Western waters*, under any pretence or title whatsoever, until the Land-Office shall be established, and the manner and terms of granting waste and unappropriated lands ascertained, shall be void and of no effect; and that no person hereafter settling in the country, upon the said Western waters, shall be entitled to any land or pre-emption of land, for such settlement, without paying for the same such consideration as shall be ascertained by the General Assembly, so as no family be entitled to more than 400 acres.

*Resolved, also,* That all persons claiming any unpatented lands on the said Western waters, by order of Council, shall lay the same before the General Assembly, on or before the 20th day of their next session, and be at liberty in the mean time, to take the depositions of any witnesses they may choose to examine, to such claims, giving reasonable notice thereof to the person appointed by the Governor and Council to attend such examination in the county, on behalf of the commonwealth, in case such persons shall be appointed.



## NOTE.

## APPENDIX.

The events which took place in Virginia, whilst *Thomas Jefferson* was Governor of the State, having excited much attention, and often been misrepresented, the following remarks and documents may prove acceptable to the inquisitive and candid reader :

It was Mr. Jefferson's fortune to fill the office of Governor of Virginia, during the most perilous and disastrous period of the revolutionary war. The paper money was rapidly losing its credit ; the State was almost disarmed, by the troops it had furnished to the North and to the South, and by other events of the war ; the Continental army had become too inconsiderable to afford it any important aid ; enlistments had nearly ceased ; drafts had become the mode of getting men ; the resources of Congress were nearly dry, and even food and raiment for an army, could only be obtained by means equally uncertain and unpopular. In this situation, the State was invaded by successive veteran armies, more numerous than it could arm, equip and feed. To resist these invasions, the militia for a long time, constituted the only force, the resort to which was, of course, limited by the deficiency of arms. Many efforts were used by Mr. Jefferson to make it as effective as possible. Frequent orders for that purpose were given to the Colonels of counties. When sent into the field, Mr. Jefferson called into service a number of officers, who had resigned or been thrown out of public employment, by reductions of Continental regiments for want of men, and gave them commands ; an expedient which, together with the aid of the old soldiers scattered in the ranks, produced a sudden and highly useful degree of skill, discipline and subordination. The countenance bestowed by this measure upon the small militia armies, had a visible effect in checking invasions, by causing the British troops to remain in, or withdraw to the lower country, and sometimes to abandon the State. But, as the destitution of resources rendered it impossible to keep these militia armies, small as they were, constantly in the field, when one invasion ceased, the State soon became exposed to another, which could not be instantly resisted, as the lower country was incompetent to that end.— Thus exposed and harassed, exertions on the part of Virginia, for helping the Carolinas, became also necessary. These, though farther distressing, were made to a great extent. Men were drafted for the regular regiments, and considerable detachments of the militia were sent to the South, and a number of horses, essentially necessary, were suddenly obtained by an expedient of Mr. Jefferson's. Instead of using a mercenary agency, he wrote to an individual (generally a member of Assembly) in each of the counties where they were to be had, to purchase a specified number, with the then expiring paper money. This expedient met with a success, highly important to the common cause. Whilst such exertions were making to assist other States, and to defend our Eastern borders, Virginia had also to oppose a powerful enemy on its Western frontier. The English and Indians, after sundry incursions of the usual savage character, were contemplating alarming enterprizes in that quarter. These were arrested by Clarke's expedition into their own country ; an expedition projected by Clarke himself, and fostered by Mr. Henry and Mr. Jefferson. Few enterprizes of the revolutionary war were bolder, more useful, or tended more to an enlargement of territory at the peace. But Virginia, exhausted by her efforts to assist her sister-States ; almost stript of arms ; without money ; harassed on the East and on the West with formidable invasions, became dissatisfied and discouraged. Many symptoms of this appeared, which it is needless to specify, but of which the writer has found irrefragable proofs, even in the public archives. At length, a powerful army under Cornwallis was poured into Virginia, which was only aided by an inconsiderable regular force under La Fayette ; and the Assembly was driven by the enemy over the mountains to Staunton. At this juncture, some of its members turned their eyes towards a dictator ; and measures for effecting the project were suddenly taken, with the zeal inspired by a belief that its execution was necessary to save the country. An individual, highly conspicuous for his talents and usefulness through the anterior scenes of the great revolutionary drama, was spoken of as the proper person to fill the contemplated office, to introduce which, it was necessary to place Mr. Jefferson *hors de combat*. For this purpose, the misfortunes of the period were ascribed to him ; he was impeached in some loose way, and a day for some species of hearing, at the succeeding session of Assembly, was appointed.

## APPENDIX.

However this was, no evidence was ever offered to sustain the impeachment; no question was ever taken upon it, disclosing, on the part of the Assembly, any approbation of the measure; and the hearing was appointed by general consent for the purpose, as many members expressed themselves, to give Mr. Jefferson an opportunity of demonstrating the absurdity of the censure. But the impeachment, sour as was the temper of the Legislature, failed to produce the two ends it had in view, namely, to put down Mr. Jefferson, and to put up the project for a Dictator. The pulse of the Assembly was incidentally felt in debates on the state of the Commonwealth, and, out of doors, by personal conversations. Out of these a ferment gradually arose, which forebode a violent opposition to any species of Dictatorship, and, as in a previous instance of a similar attempt, the apprehension of personal danger produced a relinquishment of the scheme.

Whilst these things were going on at Staunton, Mr. Jefferson was in Bedford, and neither interfered, nor was applied to by the Assembly for information touching the charges against him; but as soon as the project for a Dictator was dropped, his resignation of the Government appeared. This produced a new scene. Many of the members talked of re-electing him. Several of his warmest friends, strenuously opposed it, upon the grounds that, as he had divested himself of the government to heal the divisions of the Legislature, at that perilous season, for the public good; and to meet the accusation upon equal terms, for his own honour, his motives were too strong to be relinquished, and too fair to be withstood. Still, though General Nelson, the most popular man in the State, and without an enemy in the Legislature, was nominated, a considerable portion of the Assembly voted for Mr. Jefferson. The two considerations just stated, alone prevented his re-election.

On the day appointed for the hearing before mentioned, Mr. Jefferson appeared in the House of Delegates, having been intermediately elected a member.—To Mr. G. Nicholas, who had urged the impeachment, and who has since paid to him an homage equally honourable to both. (*See G. Nicholas's letter to his constituents; Kentucky*) He had previously requested some information relative to the charges intended to be brought against him, and communicated his answers to the same. At the autumnal session of the General Assembly, Mr. Jefferson rose in his seat, addressed the House in general terms upon the subject, and expressed his readiness to meet any accusations that should be preferred against him. Silence ensued.—Not a word of censure was whispered. After some pause, a resolution was proposed, and passed unanimously, approving Mr. Jefferson's conduct as Governor of the State; and the impeachment was no more heard of, until revived for the purposes of party and calumny.

The following papers are connected with the above note:—Paper (A) relates to Arnold's invasion. Paper (B.) contains the information requested by Mr. Jefferson from Mr. G. Nicholas, and his answers thereto. Paper (C) is a copy of the approbatory resolution, before mentioned.

## [ A. ]

(Extract from Mr Jefferson's Diary, in 1781)

1780—*Saturday, December 31, 8 o'clock, A. M.*—Received first intelligence that 27 sail were in the morning of the 29th, just below Willoughby Point.—Sent off General Nelson with full powers.

1781—*January 1.*—No intelligence.

2, 10 o'clock, *A. M.*—Information from N. Burwell, that their advance was at Warraquck Bay. Gave orders for militia—one third from some, and one half from other counties.—Assembly rose.

*Tuesday, 3, 8 o'clock, P. M.*—Received letter from E. Archer, Swans' Point, that at 12 o'clock that day, they were at anchor a little below Jamestown. At 5 o'clock, P. M. same day, I had received a letter from R. Andrews for General Nelson, that they were at Jamestown the evening of the 2d.

*Thursday, 4, 5 o'clock, A. M.*—Mr. Eppes and family, &c. came and informed me from the Speaker, that they had passed Kennon's and Hood's

the evening before, the tide having made for them at 1 o'clock, P. M. of the 3d, and the wind shifted to E. strong. They had not, however, passed Hood's, but anchored at Kennon's—Called the whole militia from the adjacent counties. I was then anxious to know if they would pass Westover or not, as that would shew the side they would land.

APPENDIX.

*Food due, 5 o'clock, P. M.*—Learnt by Captain de Ponthiere, that at 2 o'clock, P. M. they were drawn up at Westover. I then ordered arms and stores, &c. (which till then had been carrying to Westham) to be thrown across the river at Richmond; and, at half-after 7, P. M. set out to the Foundry and Westham, and set Captain Boush, Captain Irish and Mr. Helton, to see every thing waggoned from the Magazine and Laboratory to Westham, and there thrown over—to work all night. The enemy encamped at Four-mile-Creek—I went to Tuckahoe and lodged.

*January 5.*—Early, went over the river with my family—sent them up myself to Fine creek—went to Westham—gave orders for withdrawing ammunition and arms (which lay exposed on the bank to the effect of artillery from the opposite shore) behind a point—Then went in sight of Manchester—Had a view of the enemy, and my horse failing, I borrowed one—Went to Cherwood's, appointed by Baron Steuben as a Rendezvous and Head Quarters, but finding him not there, and understanding he would go to Colonel Fleming's, I proceeded there for quarters. The enemy arrived in Richmond at 1 o'clock, P. M.—One regiment of infantry and 30 horse, proceeded without stopping, to the Foundry—burnt that and the Magazine and Ballantine's house, and went as far as Westham. They returned that evening to Richmond—sent me propositions to compound for property.\*

*January 6.*—In the morning, they burnt certain houses and stores—and, at 12 o'clock of that day, left Richmond, and encamped at 4 Mile Creek. I went to Westham—ordered books and papers particularly, from magazine. In the evening, I went up to Fine-Creek.

*January 7.*—I returned to Westham, and then came down to Manchester, where I lodged. The enemy encamped at Westover and Berk'ey. It had rained excessively the preceding night, and continued to do so till about noon.—Gibson has 1,000 men Steuben 800—Davis 200—Nelson 250.

*January 8.*—At half after 7, A. M. I returned to Richmond. The wind gets about this time to N. W.—a good gale—in the afternoon becomes Easterly. The enemy remain in their last encampment. General Nelson at Charles City Court-House. Colonel J. Nicholas with 300 men at the Forest.

*January 9.*—11 o'clock—The wind is S. E. but almost nothing. The enemy remain at their last encampment—except embarking their horse.

*January 10.*—At 1 o'clock, P. M. they embark infantry, and fall down the river, the wind having shifted a little North of West, and pretty fresh. Baron Steuben gets to B. mills to night, 9 miles short of Hood.

*January 11.*—8 o'clock, A. M. The wind due West, and strong.

### LOSS SUSTAINED BY THE PUBLIC.

The papers and books of the Council since the revolution—The papers of the Auditors, but not their books. 5 brass field pieces, (4 pounders) which had been sunk in the river, but were weighed by the enemy—about 150 arms in the Capitol left—about 150 in a waggon on the Brook-road—about five tons powder, and some made ammunition at Magazine—some small proportion of the linens, cloths, &c.—some Quarter-Master's stores, the principal article was 120 sides of leather—some of the tools in the Artificers shops—Foundry—Magazine—Public store—Q. Master's store—3 waggons—4 Artificer's shops, public property—1 Artificer's shop, private property.

\* On this point, we have heard Mr. Jefferson state that two individuals were deputed to him by Arnold, to propose his allowing the British to bring, unmolested, a certain number of vessels to Rockets, for the purpose of taking away tobacco and other articles, and threatening conflagration, in case of a refusal. The degrading proposal was, of course, rejected.



**Objection.**—That General Washington's information was, that an embarkation was taking place destined for *this state*.

**Answer.**—His information was, that it was destined for the Southward as was given out in New-York. Had similar informations from General Washington and Congress been considered as sufficient ground at all times for calling the militia into the field, there would have been a standing army of militia kept up; because there has never been a time since the invasion expected in December, 1777, but what we have had those intimations hanging over our heads. The truth is, that Gen. Washington always considered it as his duty to convey every rumour of an embarkation; but we (for some time past at least) never thought any thing but actual invasion should induce us to the expence of calling the militia into the field; except in the case of December, 1779, when it was thought proper to do this, in order to convince the French of our disposition to protect their ships. Inattention to this necessary economy in the beginning, went far towards that ruin of our finances which followed.

**Query.**—When were the post riders established last summer?

**Answer.**—They were established at Continental expence to convey speedy information to Congress of the arrival of the French fleet then expected here. When that arrived at Rhode-Island these expences were discontinued. They were again established on the invasion of October, and discontinued when that ceased, and again on the first intimation of the invasion of December. But it will be asked, why were they not established on Gen. Washington's letters? Because those letters were no more than we had received upon many former occasions, and would have led to a perpetual establishment of post riders.

**Objection.**—If a proper number of men had been put in motion on Monday for the relief of the Lower Country, and ordered to march to Williamsburg, that they would at least have been in the neighbourhood of Richmond on Thursday.

**Answer.**—The order could not be till Tuesday, because we then received our first certain information. Half the militia of the Counties round about Richmond were then ordered out, and the whole of them on the 4th, and ordered not to wait to come in a body, but in detachments as they could assemble. Yet were there not on Friday more than 200 collected, and they were principally of the Town of Richmond.

**Objection.**—That we had not signals.

**Answer.**—This though a favorite plan of some gentlemen, and perhaps a practicable one, has hitherto been thought too difficult.

**Objection.**—That we had not look-outs.

**Answer.**—There had been no cause to order look-outs, more than has been ever existing. This is in fact asking why we do not always keep look-outs.

**Objection.**—That we had not heavy artillery on travelling carriages.

**Answer.**—The gentlemen who acted as Members of the Board of War a twelve-month, can answer this question, by giving the character of the Artificers, whom during that time, they could never get to mount the heavy artillery. The same reason prevented their being mounted from May, 1780, to December. We have even been unable to get those heavy cannon moved from Cumberland by the whole energy of government. A like difficulty which occurred in the removal of those at S. Quay in their day, will convince them of the possibility of this.

**Objection.**—That there was not a body of militia thrown into Portsmouth, the Great-Bridge, and Suffolk.

**Answer.**—In the Summer of 1780, we asked the favor of Gen. Nelson to call together the County Lieutenants of the Lower Counties, and concert the several measures that should be taken for instant opposition on any invasion, until aid could be ordered by the Executive, and these County Lieutenants were ordered to obey his call. He did so the first moment (to wit: *Saturday, December 31, 8 o'clock, A. M.*) of our receiving information of the appearance of a fleet in the Bay. We asked the favor of Gen. Nelson to go down, which he did, with full powers to call together the militia of any Counties he thought proper: to call on the keepers of any public arms, or stores, and to adopt for the instant such measures as exigencies required until we could be better informed.

*Query*—Why were not General Nelson and the brave officers with him, particularly mentioned?

*Answer*—What should have been said of them? The enemy did not land, nor give them an opportunity of doing what nobody doubts they would have done, that is, somewhat worthy of being minutely recited.

*Query*—Why publish Arnold's letter without General Nelson's answer?

*Answer*—Ask the printer He got neither from the Executive.

*Objection*—As to the calling out the militia, and that not till late.

*Answer*—It is denied that they were few, or late—4700 men (the number required by Baron Steuben) were called out the moment an invasion was known to have taken place, that is, on Tuesday, January 2.

*Objection*—The abandonment of York and Portsmouth fortifications.

*Answer*—How can they be kept without regulars on the large scale on which they were formed? Would it be approved of to harrass the militia with garrisoning them?

## [ C. ]

The following resolution was unanimously agreed to by both Houses of the General Assembly of Virginia, December 19, 1781:

*Resolved*, That the sincere thanks of the General Assembly be given to our former Governor THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq. for his impartial, upright and attentive administration, whilst in office. The Assembly wish in the strongest manner to declare the high opinion which they entertain of Mr. JEFFERSON's ability, rectitude, and integrity, as Chief Magistrate of this Commonwealth, and mean, by thus publicly avowing their opinion, to obviate and to remove all unmerited censure.





## ERRATA.

- Page 75. The examination of Connelly, &c. has been inadvertently suffered to remain here, instead of Dunmore's letter, alluded to in the text.
- |        |                         |      |                                  |
|--------|-------------------------|------|----------------------------------|
| 82.    | For 'Randoldh's'        | read | 'Randolph's.'                    |
| 84.    | 'Stated that savage'    |      | 'Stated that <i>the</i> savage.' |
| 102.   | 'Mass of distress'      |      | 'Mass of <i>moral</i> distress.' |
| Ibidem | 'Even there'            |      | 'Even then.'                     |
| Ibidem | 'Causes and the manner' |      | 'And in the manner.'             |
| 115.   | 'Nominated'             |      | 'Appointed.'                     |
134. ☞ No. 12 of the Appendix is connected with the note at the bottom of this page
- |      |                                  |                            |                 |
|------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 150. | 'Ever zealous desire'            |                            | 'Over zealous.' |
| 189. | ☞ Supply the marginal Index..... | <i>Dictatorial scheme.</i> |                 |
| 190. | 'Stunness'                       |                            | 'Sternness.'    |
224. ☞ *Our Synopsis* referred to in the note, has been unavoidably suppressed, as mentioned in the Preface.
- |      |   |  |           |
|------|---|--|-----------|
| 226. | 'Appendix, No. 22'  |  | 'No. 17.' |
| 236. | Contents of Chap. XI. 11th line, for 'Curns Esopus' read 'Burns |  |           |
- Esopus.'
- |      |                   |  |           |
|------|-------------------|--|-----------|
| 246. | 'Appendix No. 23' |  | 'No. 18.' |
|------|-------------------|--|-----------|
258. ☞ The No. of the Appendix here erroneously referred to, has been suppressed.
- |      |                  |  |           |
|------|------------------|--|-----------|
| 260. | 'Appendix No. 2' |  | 'No. 19.' |
|------|------------------|--|-----------|
269. ☞ The No. of the Appendix referred to in this page, has been suppressed.
- |      |          |  |           |
|------|----------|--|-----------|
| 275. | 'Simdon' |  | 'Simeon.' |
|------|----------|--|-----------|
- Ibidem The No. of Appendix mentioned in the note, has been retrenched.
306. Supply the marginal Index... *Military measures.*
328. The bottom notes should be transposed by the reader: viz. read the last note to the first reference, instead of the second, as printed, &c.
- |      |               |  |               |
|------|---------------|--|---------------|
| 342. | 'Rome'        |  | 'Roam'        |
| 348. | 'Demaubniers' |  | 'Demeunier's' |
385. The part of the Appendix here referred to, has been necessarily suppressed, on account of its great length.
- |      |                  |        |                  |
|------|------------------|--------|------------------|
| 391. | Ditto.           | Ditto. |                  |
| 448. | 'Cases fæders's' |        | 'Casus fæderis.' |







## Date Due

[illegible]

Borrowed from W.C.L. 26938  
975.5 B959 V.4  
P

Burk  
History of Virginia

NOV 10 '44

Braverman  
CARREL NO. Carrel 623

NOV 10 '44

975.5 B959 V.4 26938

P  
Burk and Jones

History of Virginia

975.5 B959 V.4 26938  
P



